

What is a CODE OF ETHICS?

The first code of ethics was written in about 1794 for the medical profession. Since then many individuals, companies, organisations and governments have written codes to help them live up to their values. So the goal is that once you've written your code of ethics this will essentially become your 'rulebook' for living sustainably. Have a look at a few of the statements that exist in the Australian Journalists' Association's Code of Ethics to get an idea of what your code might sound like:

Australian Journalists' Association Code of Ethics

- To report and interpret the news with scrupulous honesty.
- To respect confidence in all circumstances.
- To use only honest methods to obtain news, pictures and documents.

Probably the most important Code of Ethics is called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is the code that every nation in the United Nations is supposed to abide by. Have a look at a couple of their statements:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 1: All humans are born free and equal.

Article 5: No one shall be subjected to torture.

Article 24: The right to rest and leisure.

Article 26: The right to education.

To help you write your code of ethics have a look at the following structure:

What do I VALUE? It's a good idea to list all those things you value. Go back to [Exposing Values](#) to get an idea of your different values.

Prioritise your values. Imagine you are in a hot air balloon and that each of your values is a brick that is weighing down the balloon which will cause it to crash. Chuck each of your values overboard until you are left with just one.

How should I BEHAVE? Look at the things you do on a regular basis. Do you have picnics in the rainforest? Do you like take 25 minute showers? Do you put the air conditioning on in your house and then go out shopping? Look at ways to modify your regular behaviours so that they're more in line with living sustainably. For example, your code might say:

"I will turn off the lights as I leave the room" or "I will take all rubbish out of the rainforest"

Hints

Make sure your statements are simple to understand, practical and achievable. It's no use saying "I will stop global warming." It's better to say "I will ride to school at least twice a week."