

Google is now marking some hotels as 'eco-certified'

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Google is building a feature for travelers to differentiate hotels and resorts that are eco-friendly and have sustainable practices.

During a Google search for hotels, some on the list now will have a tag that says "Eco-certified" next to a green leaf.

By clicking "Learn More," and then navigating to the hotel's "About" tab, there should be a "Sustainability" tab that describes what [sustainable practices](#) the hotel employs and what certifications it has received.

Sustainable practices can range from conserving water by reusing towels to providing vegetarian meal options for guests.

The Sustainability section information is self-reported by hotels and not independently verified by Google.

However, to receive an eco-certified badge, hotels must contact a globally recognized and reputable agency to conduct an on-site audit of the [hotel's](#) sustainability practices. The evaluation must focus on environmental impact from at least four categories: energy efficiency, water conservation, waste reduction and sustainable sourcing.

Google is partnering with organizations like Green Key or EarthCheck to perform these certification processes.

EarthCheck is a scientific benchmarking certification and advisory group for travel and tourism, and it has certified hotels in more than 70 countries. Hotels are EarthCheck certified based upon standards set by the final report of the World Summit for Sustainable Development that was held in Johannesburg in 2002.

GreenKey is a voluntary eco-label awarded to more than 3,200 hotels and other establishments in 65 countries. Hotels are assessed under a set of criteria in topics like staff involvement, washing and cleaning, waste, green areas and corporate social responsibility.

Google, as part of its broader sustainability efforts, will be partnering with Travalyst to build models for calculating [carbon emissions](#) associated with travel.

A year ago, Google CEO Sundar Pichai made a commitment towards completely operating on [carbon](#)-free energy by 2030.

"A few years ago, flooding devastated Chennai, where I grew up. Seeing the images of the city—which had experienced extreme drought for so many years of my life—covered in flood waters, really made the impacts of climate change feel much closer to home. Last week, many of us woke up to orange skies in Northern California as wildfires continue to rage up and down the West Coast," wrote Pichai in a Google press release, "The world must act now if we're going to avert the worst consequences of climate change."

Google reached carbon neutrality in 2007, and on Sep. 14, 2020, it removed all the carbon it emitted since its inception in 1998.

Many other tech organizations, including Microsoft and Amazon, have made commitments to become carbon neutral or carbon negative, albeit at a slower pace than Google.

In a press release by Microsoft, they set goals to be carbon negative by 2030, and by 2050, Microsoft said it will remove from the environment all the carbon the company has emitted since 1975, thus eliminating its carbon legacy.

Amazon pledged to reach carbon neutrality by 2040 and 100% renewable energy-based by 2025.

Facebook has committed to reaching net zero emissions across its value chain by 2030.



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