

How 'circular' are you?

The circular economy is all the rage, but what is it exactly? And how do you go 'circular'? Postdoc researcher Evelien de Olde of the Animal Production Systems chair group wondered about this and decided to create a test based on the existing literature. See how you score and find out how circular *you* are.

text Evelien de Olde illustrations Henk van Ruitenbeek

- 1 YOU FIND A HOLE IN YOUR SHIRT. WHAT DO YOU DO?**
 - a. Throw it away. Time to go shopping!
 - b. Repair it (mum?)
 - c. Nothing, that's fashionable
 - d. Use it as pyjamas
 - e. Goes in the textile recycling bin
- 2 WHAT MEAT DO YOU EAT?**
 - a. None, or not much meat
 - b. Game or meat from nature areas
 - c. What I can find in the supermarket: chicken fillets, pork chops etc.
 - d. Offal and other parts such as the tail and trotters
- 3 WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR FOOD LEFTOVERS?**
 - a. Give to a housemate or save for another time
 - b. Feed to chickens, rabbits or pigs
 - c. I never have leftovers
 - d. Throw away (immediately or after keeping them for a month in the fridge)
- 4 YOUR SOFA IS STARTING TO SHOW WEAR AND TEAR – NOW WHAT?**
 - a. No problem, it'll last a few more years
 - b. Some friend or relative will be happy to have it
 - c. Take it to the second-hand shop
 - d. Put it on the New Year's Eve bonfire
 - e. Have it upholstered again
- 5 THE THERMOSTAT SAYS 18 DEGREES AND YOU FEEL COLD. WHAT DO YOU DO?**
 - a. Put on a thick jumper
 - b. Turn the thermostat up one degree and put on a jumper
 - c. Turn the thermostat up to 21
 - d. Wash up, clear up and Hoover to get warm
- 6 YOUR BIKE LIGHT STOPS WORKING. WHAT NOW?**
 - a. Get one of those little plastic LED lights from the supermarket
 - b. Fit a new wire or bulb in your current bike light
 - c. There's an old bike in the shed with lights that work; you decide to use them
 - d. Go without lights



CODE	POINTS
C	-1
R4	1
R2	2
R1	2
R8	0
R2	2
R2	2
C	-1
R6	1
R3	1
R7	1
R2	2
R9	0
R2	2
R3	1
R3	1
R9	0
R5	1
R0	2
R2	2
C	-1
R1	2
C	-1
R4	1
R6	1
R0	2

- 7 WHAT DO YOU DRINK YOUR COFFEE FROM?**
 a. My own mug
 b. Plastic or paper cups because they get recycled anyway
 c. I don't drink coffee
- 8 WHAT EGG MAKES YOUR DAY?**
 a. No egg at all
 b. A Kipster/Oerei egg (eggs from chickens fed with waste products or insects)
 c. An egg from my own chickens (which get fed leftovers sometimes)
 d. Just the usual supermarket ones
- 9 YOU DROP YOUR SMARTPHONE AND SURE ENOUGH, SCREEN'S CRACKED...**
 a. Great, I wanted the new iPhone X anyway
 b. OK, I'll buy a second-hand one
 c. I'll get the screen replaced
 d. I've still got an old, indestructible Nokia somewhere
- 10 WHAT DO YOU DO WITH RESOURCE? (MORE THAN ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE)**
 a. Resource? Never heard of it! (Eh...)
 b. I share it with my housemates or colleagues
 c. I read it online
 d. I use it as cat litter, decoration, toilet paper...
 e. I put it on the bonfire!
 f. I put it out for recycling



CODE	POINTS
R3	1
R8	0
R0	2
R0	2
R7	1
R7	1
C	-1
C	-1
R5	1
R4	1
R2	2
R0	2
R1	2
R2	2
R7	1
R9	0
R8	0

YOUR SCORE



4 points or less
 You consume happily while you still can...



5 to 14 points
 You are already becoming more 'circular'. You consciously try to reduce your impact sometimes.



15 points or more
 The circular economy is your thing. Some people think you exaggerate but thanks to you there's hope for the planet.

The sources that were used can be found with the article at resource-online.nl.



CIRCULAR ECONOMY LADDER

The points in this test are based on the ten levels of circularity that are identified in the literature. We added level C — consuming — ourselves. At this level, there is no circularity at all and the use of raw materials increases.

We admit that this point scoring system results in some strange 'advice'. In question 6, for example, cycling without a light gives the most points because Refuse (R0) is at the top of the ladder, whereas it's obviously a bad idea. For food too, not consuming at all is not an option. Those are cases where you are better off a little further down the circularity ladder.

Code		Points
R0	Refuse: avoid using raw materials	2
R1	Rethink: use a product more intensively (sharing, multifunctional use)	2
R2	Reduce: reduce use of raw materials	2
R3	Reuse: reuse products	1
R4	Repair: maintain and repair	1
R5	Refurbish: revamp products	1
R6	Remanufacture: make new products from parts of old products	1
R7	Repurpose: reuse for a different purpose	1
R8	Recycle: process and reuse raw materials	0
R9	Recover: recover the energy from materials	0
C	Consume: increase use of raw materials	-1