

Carpooling for Environment

Air pollution in India causes at least a million deaths annually. In Delhi alone, over 30,000 people die every year due to air pollution, the main causes of which are increasing road traffic and industrial pollutants, and crop and waste burning. Driving in metro cities at rush hour is something of a nightmare. Isn't carpooling all about that quaint 70's notion that we could all reduce our petrol costs and save the planet? Carpooling cuts down on the number of cars and vehicle son the road. Fewer cars means there is less carbon and other gasses and pollution getting into the air. This protects the environment by keeping the air, water, and land cleaner.

Carpooling has seen tremendous growth over the last one year. Shared rides accounted for 30% of the total trips in Bengaluru. Ola claims to have cut down the use of 7 million liters of fuel and 12 million kg of carbon dioxide emissions in 26 cities. Mobility experts believe that any kind of pooling will help fix the traffic problem. These services have become a premium mode of public transport with their A/C rides and point-to-point pickup and drop. They solve the last mile problem.

The carpooling segment in India works differently from other countries. Taxis are easily available for pooling service. But often, in their hunt for riders, taxis run empty. Here, premium taxis are mainly centered around busy areas at peak time. If they are mostly in areas with heavy traffic congestion, then they would be driving on first or second which again leads to high consumption of fuel. The thing to always keep in mind is that every liter of petrol burnt, emits 2.5 kg of CO₂.

Jakarta has the worst traffic in the world. To help alleviate the problem, the city implemented one of the world's most stringent car-pooling policies. First launched in 2003, the "three-in-one" high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane rule required private vehicles to carry three people to drive on the main roads in Jakarta's central business district, from 7-10am and 4.30-7pm. The policy was surprisingly effective in encouraging people to car-pool and get fewer cars on the road.

Traffic on city roads, pollution and other factors are making citizens to shift to carpooling, over the years. And they feel that carpooling is one of the easiest and effective ways to contribute to the environment. When you carpool, you do your bit for the environment. Plus, it's cost effective as well and you meet many interesting people. Carpooling connects neighbors, saves money, reduces congestion and is good for the environment. We can't reverse the damage that has already been done, but we can set our sights on what's happening right now — and commit to doing better.

Image Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/33495590953257544/>
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