

Sustainable Skyhawk Challenge 2020

Hello Everyone,

Happy Earth Week! Did you know this year marks the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day? The Environmental Stewardship Council and The Farm at Stonehill invite you to commemorate Earth Week with us virtually. We are collecting 50+ ways that people lead environmentally sustainable lives. [Join our Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge to contribute, and to win an Ace Mother Earth T-shirt!](#)

How to Participate

- The contest will run from April 18th to April 26th 2020. But, we hope your sustainable choices last a lifetime!
- Look for our daily emails, starting tomorrow, in which we'll share a theme and resources for you to meet our Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.
- Email us, sharing the ways you're being sustainable, to have your name entered into the contest.
 - Email: cdolan1@stonehill.edu
 - **Subject Line: Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge**

How to Win

You can share multiple ideas on multiple days. The more times you email to help us reach our goal of 50 sustainable lifestyle habits, the more your name will be entered to win! For example, if you email 5 times, your name will be entered 5 times. **Be sure to use the subject line "Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge" when you email!**

Become a Sustainable Skyhawk! Start today. End never.



Stay Involved

Want to participate in other sustainability initiatives at Stonehill?

- Check out Stonehill's [Office of Sustainability](#) website.
- Follow The Farm at Stonehill on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)
- Email environmentalstewardshipcouncil@stonehill.edu to learn how to join the council.
- Join clubs like Students for Environmental Action and Food Truth

April 18 - Day 1

Don't forget to join ESC's and The Farm's Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge, starting today! Need some inspiration?

Today's theme is reducing waste.

Did you know every day approximately [8 million pieces of plastic pollution](#) find their way into our oceans? And, currently [4.9 billion metric tons of plastic debris](#) are housed in landfills and natural environments? Don't let your waste contribute!

Recycling is an important first-step in reducing waste, but it's just as important, if not more so, to reduce consumption in the first place. Aim for a zero waste or plastic-free lifestyle to have a bigger impact. If you aren't sure how to go about this, check out [100 Steps to a Plastic Free Life](#), [Trash is for Tossers](#), or watch [Plastic Wars](#).

Consider where your waste goes. People are consuming less during quarantine, and therefore are producing less waste. However, some waste is increasing (think more water usage), or can never be eliminated (food scraps, anyone?). **Stay tuned in the days ahead to learn more about these sustainability issues!**

During quarantine, many of us are decluttering. Where do you send the items you choose to dispose of? Rather than sending them to a landfill, consider holding onto items for donation when donation centers, like Savers or St. Vincent de Paul's, reopen to accept goods. Find a local donation bin for clothing. Leave books in a Little Free Library box in your town. Lots of options exist to give your items another home where they'll be loved.

Ready to participate? Enter our contest to become one of the Top 10 Sustainability Skyhawks! Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. **Use the subject line: Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

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All our best,
The Environmental Stewardship Council and The Farm at Stonehill

April 19 – Day 2

Hi Everyone!

Don't forget to join ESC's and The Farm's Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day! **Enter for a chance to win one of ten free Sustainable Skyhawk t-shirts!** Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. **Use the subject line: Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

Looking for ideas? **Today's theme is reducing water consumption.**

Fun (or not so fun?) Fact: Americans waste an average of [1 trillion gallons of water each year](#). This number is likely to increase during the COVID-19 outbreak. People are washing their hands, clothes, and household items more often for cleanliness and safety purposes, which is important for everyone's health! Unfortunately, these actions also increase the amount of water consumed, and potentially wasted, every day. For example, Miami, Florida has already seen a [17 million gallon increase in its average water consumption](#).

In contrast, nearly [844 million people cannot access clean freshwater](#). By making a few simple changes at home, especially if there's been an uptick in your water usage, you can lessen the strain on our freshwater resources! For ideas, check out [15 Ways to Conserve Water at Home](#). If you're looking to be a bit more ambitious, [here](#) are even more ideas.

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April 20 – Day 3

Hey there, hope all are doing well at home and/or school and practicing your social distancing during this critical time. We look forward to being with you when we can!

The Environmental Stewardship Council's and The Farm's Sustainable Skyhawk Challenge continues! **Don't miss the chance to win one of ten free Sustainable Skyhawk t-shirts and commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day!** Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. **Use the subject line: Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

Today's theme is reducing energy use.

Approximately [40% of all energy consumed](#) in the U.S. is used to provide energy to our homes and to commercial buildings. As we consider the main sectors where energy is used - namely industrial, residential, commercial, and transportation - it's easy to see how many aspects of our lives rely on energy consumption.

We might also recognize that [energy consumption has decreased](#) in some sectors, like transportation, during quarantine. Fewer people are driving to work or flying in planes. Nonessential businesses, factories, and other hubs of energy consumption are closed or operating on a smaller scale. These shifts in energy consumption benefit our planet. But have you considered ways that your increased time at home may boost energy consumption in different sectors?

As people work remotely, they rely on computers, Internet, and other technologies even more than before. Did you know that it takes [70 billion kilowatt hours a year to run the internet?](#) This number will likely increase with more online traffic during quarantine. And this is only one aspect of your energy use at home! The award to most at-home energy consumption goes to *drum roll, please* cooling and heating. Folks who might usually turn down the heat or AC while at work and school during the day won't be doing so now that they're home.

Check out the [top ten energy users in people's homes](#) to help you find ways to reduce energy consumption and be [more energy efficient at home](#). **Once you take that step, tell us about it!**

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April 21 – Day 4

The Sustainable Skyhawk Challenge continues! **Don't miss the chance to win one of ten free Sustainable Skyhawk t-shirts and commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day!** Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. **Use the subject line: Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

Today's theme is **sustainable eating.**



Our eating habits have a tremendous impact on the environment. Although it may be tempting to purchase processed foods or produce grown on an industrial farm because they appear to be cheaper, it is important to consider the hidden costs of industrial farming.

Industrial agriculture:

- Encourages loss of biodiversity and [seed sovereignty](#)
- Exacerbates [carbon emissions](#) and soil degradation with excessive tilling
- [Pollutes water](#) and ecosystems by spraying synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides
- Contributes to [deforestation](#) for increased meat production
- May negatively impact pollinators ([almonds](#) for example)
- Perpetuates [overproduction and inequitable distribution](#)
- And more! Learn about more hidden costs [here](#) and [here](#).

During quarantine, people have different shopping habits than usual. Some are stocking up on lots of nonperishable items. Others might turn to processed foods for comfort. Lots of people are ordering takeout in lieu of eating out. (When you're getting takeout, consider restaurants' ingredients, cooking methods, and even takeout packaging. Better yet, bring your own takeout container!) Many more people are starting home gardens. If you're interested in taking that route, check out the [Growing Hope Guide](#) created by The Farm. You can even look around your own yard for edible plants! Learn more about foraging [here](#). If you aren't able to forage or start a garden, consider how your food choices impact the environment and check out these [tips for sustainable eating](#). Keep in mind that during this time, many store shelves are empty and pressures of food insecurity are heightened. Despite that fact, there's been an [increase in food waste](#).

Tell us about how you're supporting sustainable food choices at home. Enter our contest to earn rewards and become one of the Top 10 Sustainability Skyhawks! Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. **Use the subject line: Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.** Become a Sustainable Skyhawk! Start today. End never.

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April 22 – Day 5

Happy Earth Day!

Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day! Join ESC's and The Farm's Sustainable Skyhawk Challenge! Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. Use the subject

line: **Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

Today's theme is **commemorating the day.**



We invite you to do something special today to appreciate and protect Earth.

Lots of organizations have put together activities and ways to celebrate at home. Check out the ideas from the following organizations:

- [AASHE](#)
- [Catholic Climate Covenant](#)
- [Earth911](#)
- [Project Green School's Race for the Planet](#)

If you're looking for something a little less structured, here are some more ideas:

- Go for a contemplative walk outside
- Read an ecocentric book, such as:
 - [A Sand County Almanac](#)
 - [Silent Spring](#)
 - [Desert Solitaire](#)
- Watch an ecocentric movie, like these:
 - Children's Movies – [FernGully: The Last Rainforest](#) and [Once Upon a Forest](#)
 - [Chasing Ice](#)
 - [Living the Change: Inspiring Stories for a Sustainable Future](#)
- Listen to ecocentric songs, for example:
 - [Big Yellow Taxi](#)
 - [Mercy Mercy Me \(The Ecology\)](#)
 - [Pass It On Down](#)
 - [Seminole Wind](#)
 - [The Garden Song](#)
 - [Stone Walls](#)

Remember, even though we're practicing social distancing right now, you aren't alone in the journey to care for our common home. Check out the attached slideshow of inspiring youth focused on sustainability.

Tell us about how you're commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. Share other celebratory ideas with us! Enter our contest to earn rewards and become one of the Top 10 Sustainability Skyhawks! Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. Use the subject line: **Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

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April 23 – Day 6

We hope you had a wonderful Earth Day yesterday!
In the spirit of "Earth Day is Every Day!"....
The Sustainable Skyhawk Challenge continues!

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Today's theme is nontoxic living.

Many people don't think about the chemical and toxic ingredients in:

- [Food](#)
- [Cleaning products](#)
- [Personal care products](#)
- [Paper products](#) (many contain PFA's, chlorine, phthalates, and more!)

As an alternative to purchasing items with these chemicals – they're harmful for our bodies and for the planet – try making your own [cleaning products](#). Purchase paper cups, plates, towels, napkins, etc. that don't have dyes, fragrances, chlorine, or bleach. Check out this list of [non-toxic, environmentally friendly options](#).

Be sure to properly recycle any toxic items you do purchase, like these:

- Batteries
- Bulbs: fluorescent lamps and compact fluorescent light bulbs
- Oil based paints, stains, paint strippers, and thinners
- Automotive fluids
- Nail polish – Yes! Nail polish.
- Hazardous household waste like oven cleaners and pest control

Speaking of pest control, now that spring is arriving, lots of people are working outside to care for their lawns and gardens. An estimated [100 million pounds of pesticides are used by homeowners in homes and gardens each year](#). Be especially mindful of what you put on your lawns and in your gardens; while pesticides rid your yard of unwanted pests, many of those critters play an important role in ecosystems and food webs. Plus, some "weeds" that you aim to kill are [actually edible, medicinal, and native](#) to your area. Don't forget about run off! [Harmful chemicals often leave lawns and enter water systems](#).

Another important point to note, especially as people are working hard to sanitize living and work spaces at this time, is that [antibacterial](#) does not equal antiviral. In an effort to ward off germs, do not harm the environment or your own health by using chemicals that kill good bacteria and encourage evolution of resistant germs. In fact, [exposure to dirt and some germs helps boost our immune system!](#)

How are you living a nontoxic life? Enter our contest to earn rewards and become one of the Top 10 Sustainability Skyhawks! Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. Use the subject line: **Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

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April 24 – Day 7

Just a few more days to go! Don't miss the chance to win one of ten free Sustainable Skyhawk t-shirts and commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day! Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. Use the subject line: **Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge**.

Today's theme is **Reusables 201: Beyond the H2O Bottle!**



Switching from single-use water bottles to reusable water bottles is a great way to cut back on waste. But there are lots of other reusable options, too! To learn more about the impact of single-use items, rather than reusables, check out [The Story of Stuff](#). This video exposes the devastating environmental and social impacts of our [unsustainable] consumerism; 99% of stuff is disposed of within 6 months of purchase! Consider these other points about reusables:

- [Reusable products](#) have lower environmental impacts than recycling or using disposable products.
- [Reusable bags decrease waste and animal byproducts](#).
- [Compostable products](#) have higher environmental impacts than products made from non-compostable materials.
- [Paper based compostable](#) products are adding to deforestation while the majority of [plant based plastic compostable products](#) do not degrade in the ocean, harming marine life.

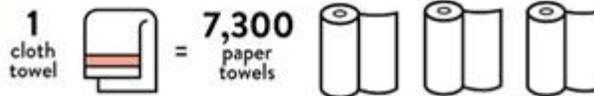
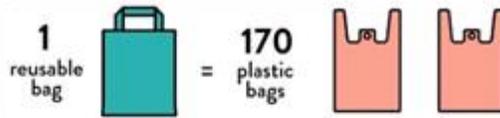
Here's a tip so you can do your part a little more easily. Leave your wallet or purse and keys next to your reusable water bottle, reusable bags, and reusable "to go" container and utensils so you are prepared when you start your day.

Special thanks to Michelle Guiney of Waste Management, and a member of ESC, who put together these resources and shared the following images with us. Don't forget to check out the attached PDF that she passed on, too.

7 SINGLE-USE SWAPS

AND THE TRASH YOU CAN SAVE IN ONE YEAR

"THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE ARE THE ONES WHO DO THE LITTLE THINGS CONSISTENTLY."



Credits: Alexandra Case via Green Dream Foundation

"Paper Or Plastic?"

Problem: The production and disposal of one-time-use bags are damaging the environment and harming the animals that inhabit it

Culprit 1: Plastic Bags

100 billion plastic bags used annually in the United States, only 3% recycled

Can take up to 1,000 years to biodegrade

Used on average for only 14 minutes

Make up more than 10% of washed up ocean debris that pollute coastlines

At least 267 species suffer from ingestion and entanglement of marine plastic debris

100,000 turtles die annually from ingesting plastic bags



10 billion paper bags used annually in the United States, only 20% recycled

14 million trees cut annually to create paper bags

Production emits 70% more air pollution than plastic bags

4x more energy to produce than plastic bags

Produce 2x more greenhouse gases in landfills than plastic bags

Culprit 2: Paper Bags



What Can YOU Do To Help?



Solution: Reusable bags!



A reusable bag only needs to be used 11 times to have a lower environmental impact than using 11 disposable bags

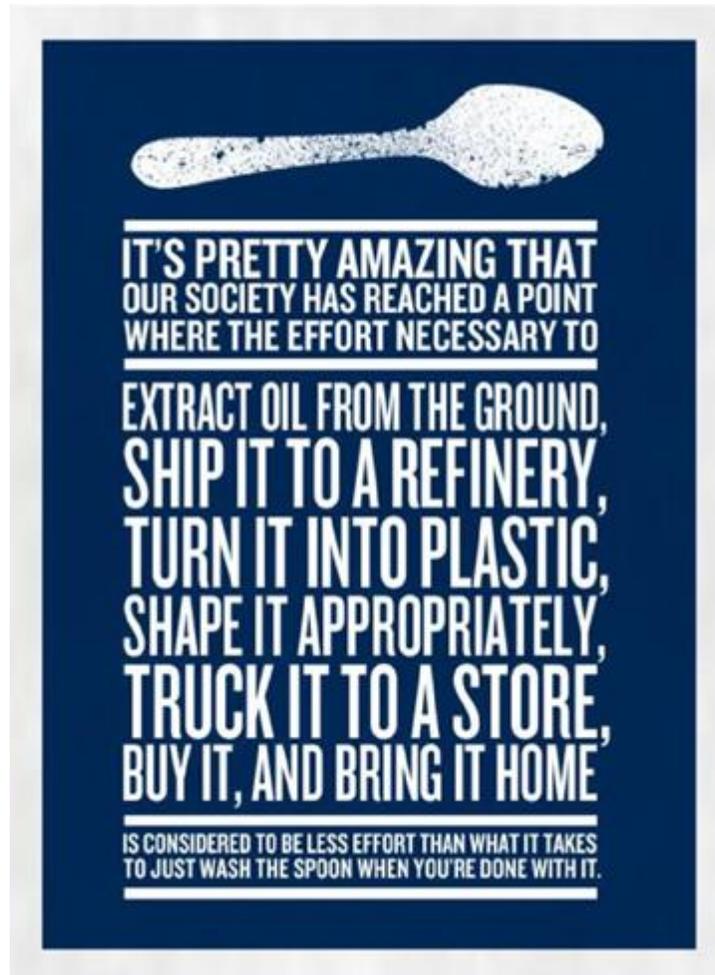
The average reusable bag has a lifespan equivalent to 700-1,000 disposable bags

One person using reusable bags over their lifetime would divert 22,000 bags from the environment

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Tell us how you're being mindful when it comes to reusables! [Enter our contest to earn rewards and become one of the Top 10 Sustainable Skyhawks!](#) Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. Use the subject line: **Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

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All our best,
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April 25 – Day 8

We're nearing the end of the Sustainable Skyhawk Challenge! Don't miss the chance to win one of ten free Sustainable Skyhawk t-shirts and commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Week! Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. Use the subject line: **Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

Today's theme is **appreciating the intrinsic value of nature.**



During quarantine, many people are going for walks, turning to nature for refuge and entertainment. In addition to hiking, there are lots of ways to appreciate the [intrinsic value of nature](#) and explore [beauty in nature](#). For example, you can:

- [Start a nature journal.](#)
- [Practice nature photography.](#)
- Set up an [outdoor meditation space.](#)
- Try [drawing what you hear](#)...how would you depict the song of a bird or the breeze rustling leaves?
- Do an [activity or arts and crafts](#) that highlight beauty in nature.

How do you appreciate natural beauty in the environment? Feel free to share some favorite nature photos with us! Enter our contest to earn rewards and become one of the Top 10 Sustainability Skyhawks! Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. Use the subject line: **Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

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April 26 – Day 9

Today is the last day of the Sustainable Skyhawk Challenge!

It's your last chance to **win one of ten free Sustainable Skyhawk t-shirts** and commemorate the **50th Anniversary of Earth Day!** Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. **Use the subject line: Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

Today's theme is **continuing the challenge.**



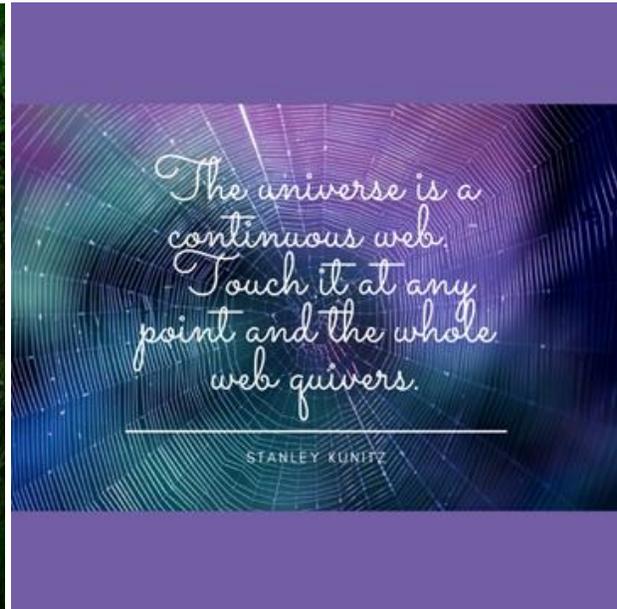
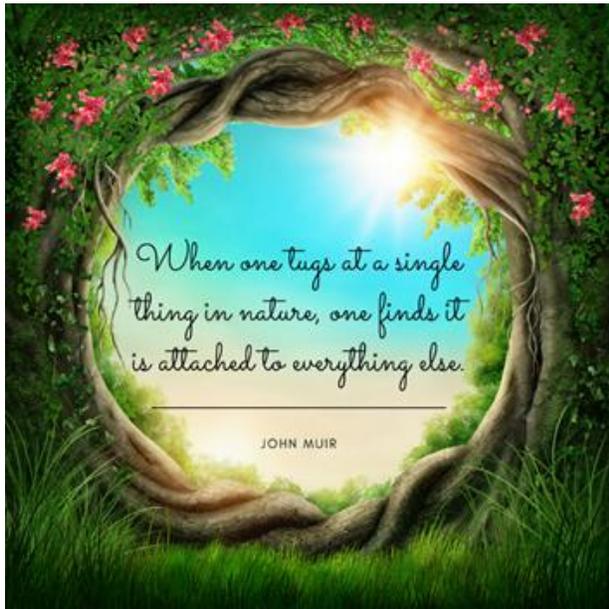
Don't let being a Sustainable Skyhawk end when the Challenge ends! Be a Sustainable Skyhawk year-round! If you need some fresh ideas, check out REI's [Opt to Act Plan](#), which has simple weekly suggestions for the whole year. Or, try some of these:

- **Green 2 Go Containers:** When you return to campus, remember to use, return, and reuse your Green 2 Go container!
- **Be an influential consumer:** Support sustainable companies and purchase sustainable products, like these:
 - [Badger Balm](#)
 - [CHNGE](#)
 - [Rocketbook](#)
 - [Plaine Products](#)
 - [Dental Lace](#)
 - [Package Free Shop](#)
- **Inspire others:** Post your ideas and photos on social media. Introduce children to the importance of these issues with books like [Plastic Sea: A Bird's Eye View](#) or movies like [Hoot](#).
- **Continue the conversation:** Tell us about other sustainable companies, practices, and products. Share your ideas with each other. Start a Sustainable Skyhawk club or join already existing groups like Environmental Stewardship Council, Students for Environmental Action, and Food Truth. Volunteer at The Farm once we're back on campus.

The possibilities are endless!

No matter what, remember that all is connected. The themes brought up throughout the Sustainable Skyhawk Challenge all relate to each other. For example, waste reduction (day 1) includes reducing waste of resources like energy and water (days 2 & 3), which has ties to the fact that [agriculture uses 70% of Earth's fresh water](#). This fact, in turn, connects to one of many reasons to eat sustainably (day 4). Eating sustainably includes not consuming chemical, toxic ingredients (day 6) or consuming foods using single-use items (day 7), which protects ecosystems around us. Those ecosystems have intrinsic value and allow us to experience the beauty and splendor of nature

(day 8). And this is just one of millions of connections that can be made when considering how our actions impact our common home. **Treat every day like Earth Day!**



How will you continue the challenge? Share a goal you have to be a Sustainable Skyhawk for the rest of your life. Enter our contest to earn rewards and become one of the Top 10 Sustainability Skyhawks! Email cdolan1@stonehill.edu a way you're being ecofriendly at home. Use the subject line: **Sustainable Skyhawks Challenge.**

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