

We have a lot of people search our site for information about eco-audits, so EC decided to find out more about eco-audits and what you can expect during an eco-audit. Alexandra Henriques (AH), founder of [ECO-Audit](#) was kind enough to answer our questions.

*EC: So I guess the first question is, what is an ECO-audit?*

AH: An ECO-audit helps families and small businesses green their footprint, save money, but above all protect the health of their members. Why? Because almost everything in the average home is slowly poisoning us. Asthma, allergies, and cancer are rising worldwide at alarming rates. Children are the most vulnerable to this assault, but we can protect them. Through the home or business premises audits we do, we facilitate the adoption of sustainable, healthy, and cost-effective materials, products and practices.

*EC: What is your background and how did you get into the business of ECO-audits?*

AH: I have been a life-long environmentalist, with over 25 years of experience pursuing sustainable practices and applying them. My professional background is in education, which has come in very handy. I find there is a lot of education to do around mainstream products and practices which are no good for the environment — or us. ECO-audit also does sustainability education by providing workshops, and my experience developing learning materials for adults, and facilitating learning has been invaluable. I got into this business because I wanted to share all the environmental knowledge I had, and help others.

*EC: What can I expect, when I get an ECO-audit?*

AH: When you get an ECO-audit you can expect an appointment on a day and time that's convenient for you, an interview to determine your concerns and objectives, and a thorough audit of the home or business premises. This will take from 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 hours. Within a week, you will receive by email the audit report, this will include all positive actions being taken presently, problem areas with concrete suggestions, a glossary of terms used, and a list of resources relevant to your issues and area. The second scheduled appointment will then take place to discuss the report, answer any questions, and help you on your way to healthier

sustainability.

Ongoing support is included in an audit, anytime you hit a roadblock; help is just a phone call or email away.

*EC: What types of eco-audits do you conduct?*

AH: Besides the whole home or business premises audits, we have Focus Audits, featuring the BABY-audit - "peace of mind for expecting parents", a very similar Pet-audit, a Diet-audit, which helps you become a locavore, green your diet, and avoid contaminants, especially important for children; we also have for D.I.Y.ers the Reno-audit, the Yard-audit, and the Move-audit; finally we have a Transportation-audit that helps those who want to drive less, but are not sure how to go about it.

*EC: What are some of the things you might suggest new parents look for?*

AH: To new parents I would suggest less is more, and go back to basics. What we see all around in our society is excess, but not necessarily quality, often just quantity. Go for the quality and protect your baby. For example, you say organic cotton is expensive, I say the baby doesn't need 10 teething toys, a couple will do, get something healthy you don't have to worry about. Go back to the basic toys all children enjoy, ones made by craftspeople out of solid wood for example, with healthy finishes, not plastic whose ingredients you can't check and mass produced by exploited workers.

*EC: When I took a look at your website, I was really interested in the Yard-audit. I have always thought we should rethink our yards to focus on native plants especially the plants that attract the birds, bees, butterflies and other animals. Our yards should really be part of the natural circle of life. Is that the focus of a Yard-audit?*

AH: Yes, that is definitely part of a Yard-audit, we have strayed too far away from nature, by starting with only native plants and then the value-added of drought-resistance we get on the right path again. Choosing to attract birds, butterflies or bees gives even more value. We can go even further by incorporating in the yard bird feeders, baths, or bird houses, a rain barrel, a composting bin, a dog W.C., a laundry line, or games.

*EC: Is there anything else that you would like to add?*

AH: Check our website for our [Spring workshops](#) , and you can also sign up for our [blog](#) .

*EC: In closing, I noticed that there are gift certificates on your site. What a great idea for a house warming gift or for a shower gift for new parents. Alexandra, thank you for your time.*

{linkr:related;keywords:green;exclude:78,47,49,111,82,118,55,112,98,52,115,56,117,146,91,95,106,142,170,94,125,153,155,156,88,92,96,137,151,154,139;limit:5;title:If+you+like+this%2C+try+these}