

The Greenhouse Effect

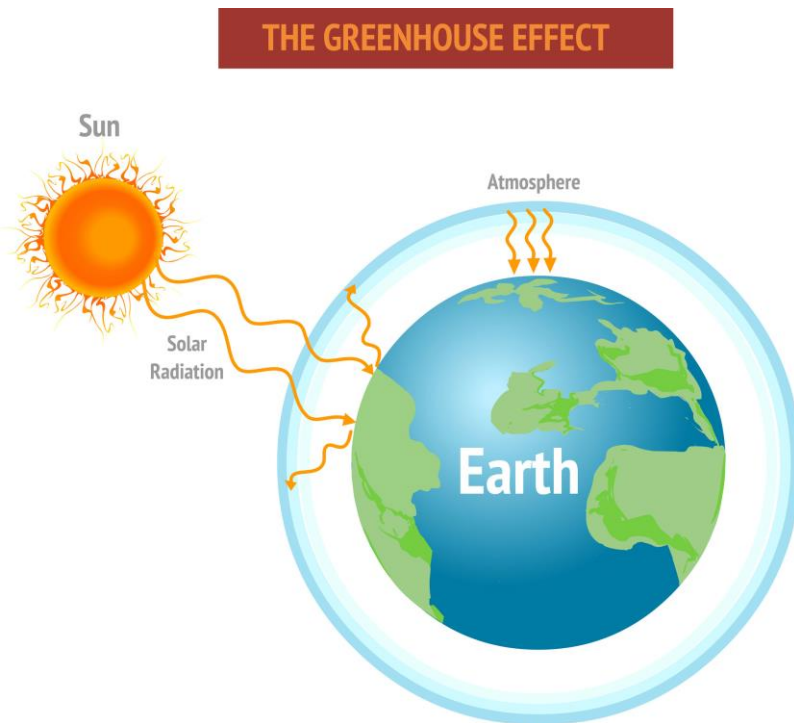
Try It Out

Take a look through the clear part of the container. Feel free to open it up, too. What do you notice? Is there water on the sides? Come back regularly to watch these strawberry plants grow!

What's going on?

Greenhouses are glass or plastic structures that are designed to let the sun in and *keep* the sun's heat in. Plants inside a greenhouse can then grow a little bit easier in colder weather. The Earth's

atmosphere has a similar effect, trapping the sun's rays and warming the planet.



*Radiation from the sun getting trapped in the Earth's atmosphere.
(Image: climate-change-guide.com)*

What's the big deal?

Human activities are changing Earth's natural greenhouse effect. Burning fossil fuels like coal and oil puts more carbon dioxide into our atmosphere. More carbon dioxide means more heat gets trapped, causing our climate to warm. This can have very harmful effects, to the point that some species of plants and animals may not be able to survive.

Wonder While You Walk...

Some gasses in the atmosphere are better than others at trapping the sun's rays. What is it that makes them better at this?