

50 WAYS TO USE LESS PLASTIC

Why should we strive to use less plastic?

- By 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean (by weight).
- Every minute, one garbage truck of plastic is dumped into the sea.
- Plastic is found as far as 7 miles deep — meaning that it contaminates the most remote places on the planet.
- More than 1 million marine animals (mammals, fish, sharks, turtles, and birds) die each year due to plastic debris.
 - Eight million metric tons of plastic are dumped into the ocean annually. Of those, 236,000 tons are microplastics — tiny pieces that humans end up ingesting when eating seafood.
- Plastic leaches toxic chemicals, endocrine disruptors (that mimic the hormone estrogen), and carcinogens into the environment and food chain.

We can live with less plastic. Start small. Choose some tips from this list and build toward a more plastic-free lifestyle. Many people doing it imperfectly is better than a few people doing it perfectly!



Decline straws at restaurants and drive-throughs. Use a reusable stainless steel or glass straw instead.



Buy popcorn kernels from bulk bins (using a glass jar) and pop them in a Dutch oven instead of using bags.



Use a countertop compost bin for food scraps to minimize garbage bag use.



Invest in reusable silicone zip-top sandwich bags.



One billion plastic toothbrushes are thrown out annually. Use bamboo toothbrushes, which are sustainable and biodegradable.

Cut down on excess packaging by buying grains, nuts, legumes, baking ingredients, cereals, and more in bulk.

Choose produce with no packaging or with biodegradable wrappers like banana leaves.



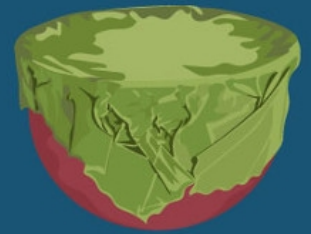
Use a reusable produce bag made of biodegradable material like cotton, hemp, jute, or bamboo.



Plastic bags make up 11.18% of plastic pollution. Support local, regional, and nationwide legislation to ban plastic bags.



Bring plastic bags to recycling drop-off locations. You can find one at PlasticFilmRecycling.org.



Swap plastic wrap for a reusable wrap made from beeswax or cotton. You can also save food in glass storage containers.



DoneGood

The DoneGood app can help you find businesses and brands committed to sustainable practices.



Single-use coffee pods take from 150 to 500 years to break down. Use reusable pods that you fill with ground coffee instead.



Decline getting a receipt whenever possible. Some are coated in a thin layer of plastic.



Enjoy ice cream in a cone, not a cup.



CERTIFIED REFURBISHED

Buy used plastic items and refurbished electronics.



When ordering delivery, tell the restaurant you don't need plastic cutlery.



When ordering pizza, request that they do not put in the little plastic table, or "pizza saver."



Use reusable shopping bags. Post reminders around your home and car so you don't forget to bring them!



Use vinegar (from a glass container) and water for cleaning.



Use baking soda that comes in a cardboard box for scrubbing.



If you have a sweeper-mop that uses disposable cleaning pads, use reusable pads made from cloth instead.



Try to avoid any personal care products with "polyethylene" listed as an ingredient.



Bottles and bottle caps make up 15.5% of plastic pollution. Ditch bottled water: Use a stainless steel, glass, or bamboo water bottle.



Switch to plastic-free chewing gum. Most gums are gummy because they are made from plastics, rubbers, and waxes.



Bring a reusable food storage container to restaurants for leftovers.



Use the app CORKwatch to determine if a wine uses a plastic or natural cork.



CLEAN UP! :)

DON'T litter. Just don't do it! Volunteer at local nature cleanup events.



Food wrappers and containers make up 31.14% of plastic pollution by unit count. Try to go a day without buying anything with plastic packaging. Then, try a week. Then, a month. The experience will be eye-opening!



Bring your own cup or tumbler to coffee shops. Many places will even give you a discount!



Use cotton swabs with paper rods instead of plastic.



When you must buy plastic, choose clear plastic bottles (for cosmetics, foods, toys, etc.), which are more likely to be recycled.



Don't release balloons or plastic confetti into the air. Try not to purchase or use balloons at all. Confetti made from fallen leaves is a better option!



Plastic flip-flops are forever: Choose rubber, cork, jute, or recycled footwear instead.



Try bar shampoos and soaps without packaging, like the ones you can buy at Lush.



Buy bread from bakeries that package in paper.



Properly secure your garbage bags to prevent fly-away plastics while being transported by garbage trucks.



Cut down on junk mail (often full of plastic). Check out DMAChoice.TheDMA.org to get started.



Buy clothing made from synthetic material like polyester, acrylic, Lycra, spandex, or nylon used when possible. Cotton, linen, and hemp are

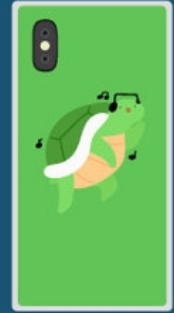
better material options.



Up to 20 billion pads, tampons, and applicators are dumped into North American landfills annually. Try a menstrual cup instead.



Shop at your local farmers' market and bring your own bags and containers. They often use way less plastic packaging.



Avoid buying new CDs and DVDs. Stream or buy used.



Crayola recycles all markers. Set up a ColorCycle program through a local school.



Staples recycles electronics, ink, and batteries. In Canada, Staples has partnered with TerraCycle to recycle writing utensils, too.



Use a razor with replaceable blades instead of disposables.



Using packing peanuts made from starch instead of Styrofoam.



Cutting up plastic six-pack rings still harms



Cigarette butts (made from cellulose acetate,



The most toxic plastics are #3 (PVC), #6



Before buying or using plastic, imagine it in a

marine life, since they can ingest the smaller pieces. Avoid them and support companies that are developing alternatives.

a type of plastic) are the largest source of single-use plastic pollution. Kick the habit!

(polystyrene), and #7 (other, including BPA). Avoid them.

landfill or in the ocean forever. Taking a moment to reflect on the consequences can compel you to find a non-plastic solution.

Sources:

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