

9 Things You Can Do

to Reduce Plastic Pollution

PlasticOceans.org

1 Stop using plastic straws.

In the US and UK, Over
550 Million
Thrown Away Every Day

2 Drink beverages from reusable bottles or mugs.

Worldwide, Over
500 Billion
Plastic Bottles Used Every Year

3 Take your groceries home in reusable bags, not plastic.

Worldwide, Up To
1 Trillion
Plastic Bags Discarded
Every Year

4 Use cloth diapers instead of disposables.

In the US
27.4 Billion
Disposables Thrown
Away Every Year

5 Ditch the disposable razor.

In the US, over
2 Billion
Thrown Away Every Year

6 Give up gum. It's made of synthetic rubber, which is a plastic.

Worldwide, Over
100,000 Tons
Discarded Every Year

7 Get the plastic off your face.

Over
300,000
Plastic Beads In A Tube of
Facewash

8 Start using bamboo toothbrushes.

In the US, Over
1 Billion
Plastic Toothbrushes Discarded
Every Year

9 Stop smoking.

In 2018, Over
2.4 Million
Cigarette Filters Found On
International Coastal
Cleanup Day

The Plastic Problem

You have likely heard of the “plastic problem,” but do you know just how large this issue is?

Plastics have become a daily part of our lives for many reasons, including their low cost and water-resistance. But the dangers of plastics often outweigh the benefits. Plastics break down rapidly and release toxic chemicals into the food we eat, the water we drink, and the environment.

Cleanups like Creek Week reduce the amount of plastic in the environment, but we will never be able to remove all of it before it breaks down into pieces too small to be seen. Even if you can't help clean-up a creek, you can make a difference. It is not enough to just recycle plastic anymore, we all must do our part to avoid buying plastic in the first place. Here are some ideas to help reduce your plastic use:

- **Use reusable produce and shopping bags.** Do you put fruit and vegetables in plastic bags at the store? You only use them for 30 minutes, yet it can take 500-1,000 years for them to decompose.
- **Avoid single-use plastics.** Refill containers such as shampoo and laundry detergent, use products with no packaging like bar soap, or switch to multiple-use products like cloth diapers or rechargeable batteries.
- **Be ready on the go.** Keep a reusable cup, utensils and straw in your car for that quick coffee run or lunch on the road. Bring your own container for restaurant leftovers.

We can all work harder to not be part of the plastic problem!

Did you know?

- 4.8 to 12.7 million metric tons of trash enters the ocean every year
- Plastic in the ocean was first discovered in the early 1970s, and plastic production has since increased 620%
- Studies have found microplastics in 1 out of 3 fish
- Plastics in the ocean will match the weight of fish by 2050
- Average life span of single use plastic is 15 seconds

For more information:

- <https://plasticoceans.org/>
- <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/national-overview-facts-and-figures-materials>

With your help, we can create a wave of change and protect the planet for future generations.