

Tips and Tricks to reducing your plastic consumption!

We can make a difference. . . one piece of plastic at a time.

At the grocery store: Buy unpackaged produce using your own reusable mesh or cloth bags. Bring re-usable bags for groceries, use paper bags or refillable containers for bulk items.

At a restaurant: Bring your own bag for take out and say **no** to plastic utensils. Encourage your favorite restaurants to use compostable takeout containers, paper bags, and eliminate plastic straws.

At home: Store food in re-usable containers. Replace Ziploc bags, plastic wrap etc. with compostable products. Store produce in veggie smart containers. Use eco-friendly cleaning products. Recycle and re-use.

Travel, attending events etc: Plan for your hydration needs; use refillable water bottles, large water container to refill water, and perhaps keep an ice chest in your car. Bring your own reusable straws, and silverware. If necessary while traveling, bring a water filter.

General shopping: Use reusable bags. Purchase items in sustainable containers whenever possible. Notice the plastic and avoid whenever able. Say **no** to plastic bag.

Online shopping: Request no plastic packaging. Shop from vendors who ship without plastic. Write reviews requesting no plastic packaging on future orders.

At the dry cleaner: Have your clothes cleaned at a dry cleaner that offers 'green reusable' garment bags. Ask your cleaner about your options.

In your community: Host zero waste events, encourage your community leaders to mandate environmental policies for your community. Write to and encourage all businesses to reduce unnecessary single use plastic.

The following are just a few businesses offering alternatives to plastic:

- <https://www.grove.com> – Natural cleaning, home, and personal care products. Plastic free and plastic neutral.
- <https://responsibleproducts.com> - 100% compostable, renewable materials (Ziploc bags etc.)
- <https://zerowastestore.com> - Variety of home products using responsible production, packaging, consumption, and reuse.
- <https://www.netzerocompany.com> - Non-toxic products made with sustainable materials, designed to last. This is one of the places to purchase net bags to put produce in at the grocery store.
- <https://packagefreeshop.com> – Variety of home and health zero waste products.
- <https://us.whogivesacrap.org/collections/all> -Donate 50% of profits to ensure everyone has access to clean water and a toilet. Forest friendly.
- <https://www.uncommongoods.com/product/veggie-smart-storage> -More than half the products are eco-friendly or handmade and packaging is eco-friendly..
- <https://lastobject.com> – Sustainable alternatives to single use products.
- <https://refillmadnesssacramento.com/sonoma> - Plastic free products for the entire house.
- <https://buyifyoucare.com> –Compostable paper sandwich bags, coffee filters etc. Often sold in your local markets.
- <https://www.lushusa.com/hair/shampoo-bars/> -Personal grooming products.
- <https://leafshave.com/> -Shaving products.
- <https://us.modibodi.com/> <https://www.shethinx.com/> - Disposable products for menstruation.
- <https://www.refillmercantile.com>
- Many grocery stores allow customers to bring their own refillable containers. Check with your local grocer. (Olivers in Sonoma County does this)

***There are many companies offering plastic free shipping.

The beauty is we can choose to refuse plastic and encourage our friends to refuse. They can encourage their friends to refuse. . . AND IT SPREADS!

Why do we need to reduce plastic waste?

*We humans have an insatiable appetite for single use plastic.
Here are a few facts about plastic:*

Create a plastic free life. A few changes in the products we use can make a remarkable difference! Our actions can impact each other, ourselves, our planet, and show our children what kind of future we want for them. Notice your own plastic waste.

- Toxic chemicals are used in the making of plastic and those chemicals often end up in our bodies.
- It takes approximately 1.4 gallons of water to make one plastic bottle.
- Single-use plastic is produced from fossil fuels. It is estimated that just the extraction of these fossil fuels and their transportation to plastic factories emits **12.5 to 13.5 million metric tons** of greenhouse gases every year.
- Plastics never break down completely and can take up to 450-500 years to become micro and nano plastics.
- Single use plastic is often used for **just** seconds or minutes.
- Plastic ends up in our oceans, streams and rivers both as microplastics and large pieces of plastic. It becomes entangled and mistaken for food. It is then ingested by animals, fish and humans and has no nutritional value, can't be digested and **may** result in disease, death, infertility, and cancer.
- Every year more than **11 million tons of plastic** end up in the oceans. This not only has devastating effects on life underwater, but on the entire environment, the economy and ultimately on all of us. We humans created the problem – and we can solve it too!