



BestFoot Plastic Challenge

Collection Plan Summary

Self awareness and empowerment helps foster improved choices and perpetuates hope and further desire for a positive impact. The exercise of separating all plastic from your trash for a few weeks is eye opening.

Purpose

Awareness of your personal intake as a consumer of single use plastic. Recycling is not the answer. Reducing holds the biggest impact and potential.

Goal

Empower yourself to make better and better purchasing choices that help preserve Mother Earth for your health as well as for future generations.

Process/Instructions:

Decide on a collection time frame, anywhere from 2-4 weeks/1 month.

You will be separating out all plastic, like you already separate out your recyclables. You will need an additional container for this exercise.

Collect (wash as needed) in a separate container all **non locally recyclable plastic** rather than tossing into your regular garbage can for the desired time frame. Examples provided below.

YES

plastic bags - shopping, produce, bread, cereal, baggies etc.

plastic packaging or wrap

plastic lids, cups, utensils, straws, saran wrap, cellophane, etc.

toothbrush, hairbrush, dish brush, etc.

NO

locally recyclable plastic containers (No. 1 and 2 bottle, tubs, jugs, jars) -
recycle those

containers with hazardous contents (auto fluids, chemicals etc.)

Ideas

- Document your experience with photos or videos to share on social media and to keep as a visual reminder for yourself.
- Do this with a friend and compare findings and observations.
- Journal or share your experience with others to help you remember more details of this experience

Upon Completion

On a tarp or old bed sheet, maybe out in the garage or yard, spread out all the plastic items you separated out from your regular trash can so you can better see what it entails. Take a photo.

Then consider the following Questions:

- What is most striking to you about having done this?
- How do you feel when you look at the pile?
- Where in your body are you feeling a charge or sensation?
- How much has the volume of your regular trash can changed?
- List the most likely or easiest candidates for switching out for same or similar product not in plastic? Which will be the hardest?
- Are there any items you could eliminate entirely?
- Are there any items you can see a second use for? (plastic bag as a garbage liner, toothbrush for scrubbing around faucets or sink drains, container for misc. loose screws etc.)

Write down or journal about your answers and thoughts, ideas and feelings. Don't forget to take that photo!

Next Steps

While shopping or purchasing anything online, consider taking a few moments to see what non-plastic options you have for that item. Does it come in bulk? Are there similar products in glass or paper? Could you make it from scratch (example - hummus is easy to make using canned chickpeas - aluminum cans are very recyclable.) Could you go without or consume it less frequently? For non-food, could you thrift it or borrow it?

Pick one or two items to start with. Once you are comfortable with that switch, look at the photo or your notes again to see what else in your shopping cart could be looked at differently. Smaller incremental changes are easier to maintain and don't overwhelm or frustrate.

Why do this?

Plastic is a very significant environmental and ecological concern for our bodies and planet, and takes anywhere from 10 to 1,000 years to break down into micro plastics and never completely disappears from the planet. One way to get a visual of how much plastic we toss into the trash, is to separate it out and get the true picture. In the U.S. alone, producers of polyethylene are continuing to increase production capacity. Industry leaders explains that this increase of production is fueled by expected increases in demand for disposable plastics, such as bottled water, soft drinks and other packaging. **You have the power to change this!!**

Recycling programs and systems are getting more and more challenging and more troublesome and are not the answer. Too many stories of where what was supposed to get recycled never does and rather ends up in the landfill or worse. Supporting producer responsibility for end of life is the true powerhouse, but will be slow to impose and regulate. Reducing your consumption of them is much more impactful than writing to companies to encourage different choices. Or write them to tell them why you have decided to stop buying their product.

Please reach out via email or Facebook and tell me how it went!

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