

# How to Start Replacing Your Disposable Plastic with Reusables (and Save the Planet!)

*You likely use far more disposable plastic than you realise.*

The water bottle you grab from the vending machine after your workout is made of plastic. The plastic utensils and containers you get with your takeout are made of plastic. Those shampoo bottles, shower gel, razors and even toothbrush you take into the shower every morning are *also* made of plastic.

Plastic is in the excessive packaging around your groceries, the straw in your fancy cocktail, your cosmetics packaging (and sometimes the cosmetics themselves), the packaging from your kid's birthday present, and many other places besides. It's everywhere.

**And all this disposable plastic usually ends up in one place; the ocean.**

Luckily there are tons of ways you can replace these disposable plastic items and make a difference to the planet. Here are our top five.

## 1. Ditch plastic water bottles

Plastic water bottles are one of the leading causes of ocean pollution so switching to [a reusable bottle](#) is clearly an excellent first move.

An incredible 57.3 billion plastic water bottles were sold in the US alone in 2014 and the vast majority of these weren't recycled, but thrown straight into the trash where they end up sitting in landfill, or ending up in rivers, streams, oceans or pacific gyres.

There's also a growing amount of concern that some of the toxic chemicals from disposable plastic bottles could be leaching into your drinks and endangering your health.

Luckily there are many eco-friendly options that will keep you hydrated without damaging the environment. These include stainless steel or glass bottles.

## 2. Just say 'No!' to plastic cutlery

Did you know that those cute little forks you get with your takeout food are used for an average of three minutes before they're just tossed into the trash? This is absolute madness!

That's why many countries like [France have now banned](#) non-composable disposable plastic cups, cutlery and plates, and a [BYO chopsticks trend](#) has been sweeping China and Japan over the past couple of years.

*What's the alternative?* Easy! Get yourself a set of [reusable bamboo utensils](#) or fold-away metal utensils, throw them into your bag and pull them out when you need them.

### 3. Refuse a plastic straw

It's time to politely say 'No' to that unnecessary, single-use plastic straw and find an eco-friendly alternative instead.

An astonishing [500,000,000 straws are used and disposed of every day in the US](#) alone, and these are only used for a couple of minutes before being thrown away. They're also among the top ten items found on beach clean ups around the world.

But don't worry- you don't have to forego that fancy straw in your favourite cocktail, milkshake, smoothie or protein shake just because you've got a green conscience.

Simply request a paper straw, carry your own cute reusable stainless steel or glass straw, or go 'naked'.

### 4. Take your own reusable coffee cup

Five hundred billion disposable cups are manufactured around the world in a year (*that's 500,000,000,000, in case you're curious*),

And despite what you probably think, they're not made entirely of paper. These cups are lined with polyurethane plastic, meaning they can't be recycled or composted.

But there is a solution, and it doesn't involve quitting your daily beverage. Just take [your own reusable cup](#) with you and ask them to fill it up- most places won't mind at all. Besides, they come in many shapes, sizes and designs these days that speak volumes about your personal style, help save the planet and carry the biggest latte grande you need, entirely guilt-free.

### 5. Rethink your toothbrush

It's easy to forget that our toothbrushes are also made of disposable plastic. They're actually just as bad as those plastic bottles, plastic bags, plastic straws and plastic cutlery when it comes to global pollution.

So next time you need to replace your toothbrush, why not opt for [a bamboo toothbrush](#) instead? They look gorgeous, they feel wonderful and when you're done you can just throw them onto your compost heap and be done.

There are many simple switches you can make right now to start reducing the amount of plastic you're using and do your bit for the planet.

*Which one of these reusable options will you choose first?*