

Why We Should All Stop Using Plastic Bags and Chose Reusable Instead

Did you know that approximately one million plastic bags are used every minute across the world?

This number is so massive because plastic bags are a cheap and convenient way to package our goods and take them home with us. We often don't give them much thought at all- they're just part of the modern world.

But this convenience comes at a shockingly high price.

Plastic bags contribute to such a high level of environmental pollution, animal death, human illness and use such a massive amount of natural resources, that countries as far apart as Ireland, Kenya, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Rwanda have banned plastic bags altogether. Certain parts of Australia, the US and the entire European Union have also introduced restrictions and special plastic bag 'taxes' to try to reduce their use.

So, what is so bad about plastic bags? Why should we stop using them and find a reusable alternative instead?

Plastic bags kill marine life

Around one million birds and [100,000 turtles](#) and other sea animals die every single year from consuming plastic waste, often in the form of plastic bags.

These animals confuse this brightly coloured plastic with food they *normally* eat, such as jellyfish, plankton and other sea life and end up paying the price for their mistake.

After being eaten, these plastic bags usually don't pass through the body, and instead stay trapped inside their digestive systems, slowly poisoning them from the inside.

With an increasing amount of plastic taking up their digestive space, limiting the nutrients they can absorb from their food and at times, literally blocking their digestive system, they simply starve to death, usually in a great deal of pain.

These numbers don't even take into account the massive number of animals who get [tangled in floating plastic](#) and either get injured or die.

Plastic bags take many years to decompose

The truth is, we just don't know how long plastic bags take to decompose, if they do decompose at all. They've only been around for the past thirty years or so, so we don't have first-hand experience. Scientists estimate that [the figure could be somewhere between 500-1000 years](#). (Yes, you read that right.)

However, it's more likely that they don't biodegrade at all, but instead *photodegrade*. This means they just break into smaller and smaller pieces which get ingested by animals, pollute the oceans and potentially do even more damage to the environment.

Plastic bags usually aren't recycled

Plastic bags are shockingly expensive and power-hungry to recycle so only 2% of all plastic bags ever make it to the recycling facility, let alone end up being recycled. The rest are simply sent to landfill where they sit there for centuries, or end up blowing into rivers, oceans, farms, forests and deserts and contributing even more to global pollution.

Plastic bags are *really* bad for the environment

Plastic bags use a huge amount of natural resources for their production- the oil used to create just a handful of plastic bags could drive your car for a mile! And if your plastic bag *does* manage to get recycled (see above) it will require 15% more energy than when it was originally produced.

Plastic bags just look ugly

Plastic bags certainly aren't the most attractive item in the world either, even when they're brand new from the store. It's *much* more stylish and attractive to have a cloth bag on your shoulder, plus it speaks volumes about your ethics and love for the planet we're all living on.

We need to move away from using single-use plastic bags and start using reusable alternatives instead.

There are [so many options available](#) on the market, including smaller mesh bags for your produce and bulk shopping, larger bags for your groceries and other shopping and even convenient roll away bags you can stash in your bag for emergencies.

There are no more excuses- **stop using plastic bags now and opt for reusable instead.**