








A GUIDE TO PLASTICS AND BETTER ALTERNATIVES

SYMBOL	TYPE OF PLASTIC	WHAT IT'S MADE INTO	CHEMICALS AND HARM	SOLUTIONS - WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP
	PETE or PET polyethylene terephthalate	clear plastic bottles (for water, juice, soft drinks, mouthwash, salad dressing), clear plastic food containers, lids for take-out drink cups, microbeads in personal care products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains the chemical antimony, a suspected carcinogen leaches chemicals having estrogenic activity (EA) recycled into fleece clothing and bedding which releases plastic microfibrils when washed. The microfibrils are not able to be collected and end up in the ocean. 	Buy items in glass. Use reusable drink bottles. Check all personal care products for microbeads (including scrubs, toothpaste, sunscreen, liquid soap) and don't buy them. Buy bar soap wrapped in paper instead of liquid soap. Choose clothes made of natural fibres such as bamboo.
	HDPE high density polyethylene	opaque plastic bottles (for juice, milk, shampoo, conditioner, laundry detergent, bleach), drink bottle caps, plastic bags, buckets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaches chemicals having estrogenic activity (EA) plastic bags are eaten by sea turtles and other marine life plastic caps are ingested by sea birds 	Bring your own reusable bags everytime you go shopping or if you forget, hand-carry or ask for a cardboard box. Buy drinks such as juice in glass bottles.
	PVC polyvinyl chloride	bottles for cooking oil, cling wrap, vinyl shower curtains, rain coats, exercise balls, toys (such as pool toys, rubber duckies), pipes, upholstery, wire insulator, vinyl fences, window and sliding door frames, louvers, vinyl flooring, vinyl siding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cancer causing dioxins are released into the atmosphere during PVC production contains phthalates which cause cancer leaches chemicals having estrogenic activity (EA) the most toxic plastic and known as the "poison plastic" 	Use reusable bees wax wraps to cover your food instead of cling wrap. Buy PVC free shower curtains. Never install PVC fences - use wood, rock or other natural materials instead. Buy doors and windows made of metal or wood instead of PVC plastic. Use bamboo, wood, slate and other natural materials on floors instead of vinyl.
	LDPE low density polyethylene	bags (for newspapers, groceries, dry cleaning, bread, frozen foods, produce), plastic wrapping around products, six-pack rings, caps and lids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaches chemicals having estrogenic activity (EA) plastic bags are eaten by sea turtles and other marine life six-pack rings are an entanglement hazard to marine life 	Bring your own reusable produce bags to buy fruit and vegetables at the store and farmers' market. Avoid buying drinks with six-pack rings.
	PP polypropylene	containers (for yogurt, soup, margarine, syrup), rigid caps and lids, food storage containers, straws, bottles for vitamins, medicines and supplements, microbeads, fake grass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaches chemicals having estrogenic activity (EA) plastic caps are ingested by sea birds microbeads are ingested by marine life plastic grass is harmful to the environment and health 	Use your own glass or stainless steel straw or say no thanks to straws. Choose glass bottles of vitamins where possible. Use glass food storage containers. Use real grass or native plants, never install plastic grass.
	PS polystyrene	"styrofoam" cups, plates, bowls, clamshell containers, egg cartons; styrofoam packaging, plastic cutlery, CD cases, lids for take-out coffee cups, styrofoam roof shingle inserts, clear plastic take-out food containers, air soft pellets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaches styrene, a known carcinogen into hot, oily and acidic food and drinks leaches chemicals having estrogenic activity (EA) breaks easily and pieces are ingested by marine life 	Bring your own glass, stainless steel or ceramic cups, bottles and containers for take-out food/drinks. Buy eggs in cardboard cartons instead of styrofoam. Don't allow styrofoam inserts in metal roof construction.
	OTHER includes polycarbonate, bioplastics (plant based), other plastics that don't fit in 1 - 6 and mixed plastics.	polycarbonate 5-gallon water dispensers, "sport" water bottles, inner linings of canned food and drinks, bicycle helmets, white dental fillings, coffee pods such as K cups, bioplastics including compostable cups, plates and bowls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> polycarbonate plastic leaches chemicals having estrogenic activity (EA) including bisphenol A (BPA), an endocrine disruptor, into food and drinks. BPA is linked to breast cancer, prostate cancer, diabetes and obesity "biodegradable" plastic labels are false and misleading as the item is made of plastic with a small amount of starch 	Use a water filter at work instead of a plastic water dispenser. Use reusable drink bottles made of glass or stainless steel. Buy fresh food rather than canned food. Buy drinks in glass rather than plastic or cans. Use paper coffee filters instead of plastic coffee pods. Do not buy "biodegradable" plastic items.