



Reusable cloth bags are a must.

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Adopt a Plastic-free and zero waste sustainable lifestyle

Ms. Pratishtha Gupta

The concept of Plastic Free July Challenge came into existence about a decade ago. It is impossible to imagine our modern lifestyle without the use of plastics. They have proved to be of great utility in the past few decades. However, their non-biodegradable nature is proving to be a huge disaster too. Reducing the use of plastics is the need of the hour. To advocate reduction of plastic, the concept of Plastic Free July Challenge came into existence about a decade ago. This initiative gives us an opportunity to think and work on plastic waste management and also become part of the solution. Let us understand how we can reduce plastic from our everyday lives.



Prepare a zero-waste kit and always carry it with you

Zero-waste kit -Photo Credits-
<https://www.recycling.com/zero-waste-starter-kits>

We don't need to stress about figuring out how to start living a plastic free July (or any month for that matter), we can simply start leading a plastic free life by eliminating single use plastic items from our day-to-day life. Migrating from plastic bags to cloth bags is painless and only needs some discipline. Carrying a few with you in your car or handbag will ensure you do not pick plastic bags from the stores. Carrying water with you not only saves money but also ensures you do not have to buy a plastic bottle. Prepare a zero-waste kit and always carry it with you. Having things at hand means you'd not be compelled to use plastic / disposable personal items because you do not have them on you. The kit is simple to make and can easily stay in your handbag or backpack. Collapsible cups, stainless steel or bamboo cutlery, handkerchiefs or napkins are some things that are handy.

ZERO WASTE kitchen



Zero waste kitchen is not hard to achieve –Photo Credits -ecowarriorprincess.net

Eliminating plastic from everyday life

Food, grocery, beauty products, are most common places where we use plastic and that can be reduced. Replacing body washes in plastic bottles with soap bars, shaving foams with creams, switching to lotions and creams that come in glass packaging and to wooden combs and toothbrushes is easy. While dining out and ordering in, simple requests to not send spoons and packing food in foil rather than plastic ensures lower plastic use — reusing that you already have is a great idea too. Using natural scrubbers in the kitchen that are made up of coconut coir or jute instead of using synthetic foam scrubbers and citrus fruit bio-enzymes as an all-purpose cleaning agent instead of buying phenyls and other chemical laden cleaners helps you reduce plastic bottles and chemicals that come with cleaners.



Carrying a refillable steel water bottle is an easy and smart way to reduce plastic waste-

Photo Credits-

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/plastics/plastic-takeaway-packaging>

5 Rs of plastic free life

Always refuse to buy things which are not required. Learn to refuse to buy single use plastic products like plastic straws, bags, cutlery. Learn to reduce things which are required but one can do without them. Inculcate the practice of reusing an item, for its original purpose (conventional reuse). Replace all single use eating utensils, Styrofoam cups, water bottles and paper plates with compostable or reusable alternatives so that you can reuse them. Try to repurpose every plastic item which cannot be refused, reduced and reused. Give wings to your imagination and assign a new role to such plastic products e.g., use cardboard boxes for storing supplies, old plastic mugs can be used as pen stands. Learn about the 7 recyclable codes which are printed within recyclable symbol on almost every plastic product. Plastic products with code numbers 1 and 2 should always be sent to proper recycling facilities. Plastic products with code number 7 should always be secured through eco bricks.

About Author:

Ms. Pratishtha Gupta is an accomplished Educator, CBSE Master trainer, blogger, Environmentalist, Content Creator and Innovation mentor for students. She is the proud recipient of State Teacher's Award 2022 by Delhi Government, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Education Excellence Award -2022 (ICERT) and Ekalavya Award-2023 (ICERT). She is an enthusiastic science teacher and a firm believer in the power of education to shape lives. She has conducted several workshops, environment education programs and life skills sessions across the nation on various topics for students and teachers. As a lifelong learner herself, she firmly believes in the importance of continuous growth and self-improvement. She is dedicated towards improving the lives of young minds and giving back to society through her work.