

LITTLE  
RIPPLES MAKE  
BIG CHANGE

# Shopping Bags



SINGLE-USE & PLASTIC WASTE PREVENTION REGULATION

[gov.bc.ca/reuse](http://gov.bc.ca/reuse)

**What is a shopping bag?** New carrier bags (like grocery bags) that are provided to customers, most often at a checkout.

## What you need to know

As of December 20, 2023, Canada is phasing out single-use plastic shopping bags.



PROHIBITED



As of July 15, 2024, B.C. businesses must charge a fee for new reusable and new paper bags.

FEE REQUIRED



## What you need to do

### 1. Stop using plastic checkout bags

Don't provide customers with single-use plastic shopping bags, including those made of compostable, biodegradable or oxo-degradable plastic.

### 2. Offer customers the option to use their own bag or to go bag-less

Post a sign or mention it at the register. Download our reusable bag poster at [gov.bc.ca/reuse](http://gov.bc.ca/reuse).

### 3. Charge fees for reusable and paper shopping bags

- ▶ Charge at least \$2 for each new reusable shopping bag and at least 25¢ for each new recycled paper shopping bag.
- ▶ Let customers know about the fee in advance, and show any fee charged as a separate line item on receipts.
- ▶ You may use the fees you collect as you choose: to offset your costs, for example, or to invest in a take-a-bag/leave-a-bag program.

#### 4. Choose reusable and paper bags carefully

- ▶ Ensure any new reusable shopping bags you offer are durable – **designed to be re-used and machine-washed at least 100 times.**
- ▶ Ensure any new recycled paper shopping bags you offer have **at least 40% recycled paper** content and are labeled “recyclable,” along with a reference to the percentage of recycled content they contain.



#### 5. Keep records

If you're a large business or part of a franchise with 500 or more B.C. employees, keep a record of the average number of new reusable and recycled paper shopping bags you provide per sale. Records must be kept on hand for two calendar years.

These bags are exempt under the regulation, and may be offered to customers free of charge.

#### EXEMPTIONS



Used shopping bags



Small paper bags less than 15 x 20 cm flat



Recycled paper bags for food delivery and drive-through orders, but **NOT** for takeout



Bags available in-store for fruit and vegetables, bulk foods, flowers, meats and frozen foods



Recycled paper bags for prescription drugs and medical devices



Reusable bags and recycled paper bags used by non-profits to distribute food and hygiene products

### This fact sheet is part of a toolkit produced to help B.C. businesses comply with the regulation.

**Looking for options to single-use plastics?** Find our handy alternatives guide, plus fact sheets on other restricted items and additional printable tools – including posters and signs that you can use to inform your staff and customers – at [gov.bc.ca/reuse](http://gov.bc.ca/reuse).



*Through the Single-Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulation, B.C. is phasing out many hard-to-recycle single-use plastic items – reducing waste, protecting our environment, and creating a cleaner future for all British Columbians.*



Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy