

LITTLE
RIPPLES MAKE
BIG CHANGE

Buyer's Guide to Single-Use Items



SINGLE-USE & PLASTIC WASTE PREVENTION REGULATION

gov.bc.ca/reuse

10 things to consider if you use disposables

1. Is the packaging necessary?

Avoiding extra packaging helps reduce the amount of plastic produced and thrown away.



2. Is there a reusable option?

Reusable cups, cutlery, containers and packaging can lower business costs, reduce waste and save water. Studies have shown a net environmental benefit of reusable cutlery over plastic after just two uses. Alternatively, giving people the option to bring their own cups, containers and bags saves money and helps the environment. For more information see the Ministry of Health's Provincial Policy on the [Use of Reusable Food Containers](#).

3. Is there a reusable program in the area?

Search "reusable programs (your location)" online for container or cup-share programs. Or consider a deposit system for in-house containers or a simple take-a-bag, leave-a-bag program for your business.

Examples of programs funded through CleanBC Plastics Action Fund:

- ▶ Reusables: reusables.com
- ▶ ShareWares: sharewares.ca

4. Can you use items made with recycled material?

Using items made from recycled materials reduces the use of new resources and materials, including plastic and paper. It also helps create a demand for recycled content.

REUSE IN ACTION

The Rethink Disposable program in the U.S. aims to stop waste before it starts by encouraging a shift away from single-use food packaging. These three case studies show some of the positive effects.

- ▶ **Fast food restaurant:** [Subway](#)
- ▶ **Coffee shop:** [The Conservatory for Coffee, Tea & Cocoa](#)
- ▶ **Charitable organization:** [Franciscan Charities of Newark](#)



5. If the item is plastic, is it made from a highly recyclable plastic: PET (#1), HDPE (#2), LDPE (#4) or PP (#5)?

Many recycling facilities in B.C. process recyclable plastic into pellets, which are used to create new items. This reduces plastic waste and decreases the need for new plastics.

6. If the item is not plastic, is it recyclable?

Clean pulp, paper and plastic-lined cups and containers can be recycled throughout the province. Unlined/uncoated wood, fibre or soiled pulp and unlined paper may be accepted by some compost facilities. Check RecycleBC and your local municipality to find out more.

7. Is the item made from one type of material?

Items made from a combination of different materials can contaminate recycling and composting streams. When possible, choose items made of a single material, like paper bags with paper handles.



8. If the item is plastic, is it clear and uncoloured?

Tinted plastics – like transparent blue and green PET – can be recycled but are less versatile in what they can be made into. Where possible choose clear, uncoloured items instead.

9. Does the packaging fit the product?

Reduce plastic by choosing packaging that is the right size for the product.

10. Is the item free of small detachable parts?

Choosing containers with no detachable tabs or closures will help ensure everything is collected and recycled, rather than small pieces being lost or littered.



Avoid hard-to-recycle plastics:

- ▶ Oxo-degradable plastic
- ▶ Compostable plastic
- ▶ Biodegradable and degradable plastic
- ▶ PVC and PVDC (#3)
- ▶ Polystyrene, including rigid polystyrene (#6)
- ▶ Other plastic, including mixed plastics, polycarbonate and BPA (#7)
- ▶ Black plastics
- ▶ Mineral-filled polypropylene (MFPP)

MORE RESOURCES

- ▶ [Provincial Guide to Alternatives to Single-Use Plastics](#)
- ▶ [Golden Design Rules for Plastics Packaging Guidance](#)
- ▶ [Association of Plastic Recyclers Design® Guide](#)



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