



Week 1: REFUSE SINGLE-USE

Each week of the Lent Plastic Challenge we will have a new theme and suggestions of how to give up or replace single-use plastic items. You can do as little or as many as works for you!

Whether it's plastic or any other kind of disposable material (including compostable plastics), the issue is their end-of-life. So what can you refuse? And can you embrace a reusable? **Don't forget to share pictures of your plastic-free alternatives.**

There is a nationwide [Facebook group](#) to share in and [#LentPlasticChallenge](#) on Instagram.

	Straws	Coffee cups&lids, plastic stirrers	Plastic bags	Takeaway packaging	Plastic cutlery
Just refuse	Watch out especially for the oxy-degradable ones – these break down into micro-plastics, causing harm to ecosystems.	Coffee cups are lined with a plastic liner. Even “compostable” ones won't compost in the general waste or in the recycling bin	There is a ban now on free plastic bags, but not in smaller shops, and not for the smaller bags used when buying fruit and veg.	Most takeaway packaging, even cardboard, has a plastic lining. Bioplastic boxes will not biodegrade if they become litter.	Even compostable plastic knives and forks cause the same problems as plastic. If they fall out of bins, end up in storm drains,

	<p>Keep in mind that all compostable plastics need to be heated to 60 degrees for 90 days to break down!</p>	<p>(nothing does), and they can't go in a composting facility as they would be just pulled out and burnt!</p>		<p>Read this guide from Refill on how to navigate on-the-go packaging.</p>	<p>then in rivers and the sea... causing harm to wildlife.</p>
<p>Choose other options</p>	 <p>If you really can't live without them, there are metal, bamboo or even ones made from wheat (actual straw!) alternatives.</p>	 <p>Take your own reusable cup – or relax and drink in.</p>	 <p>For fruit and veg, buy loose or take existing bags along.</p> <p>Ask your supermarket for plastic-free options. A plastic-free aisle has been achieved in Budgens recently.</p>	 <p>Choose a reusable option. We highly recommend taking a tiffin box along.</p> <p>Dabbadrop is offering tiffin collection service in parts of London.</p>	 <p>Ask for metal, wood or keep your own stashed in your pocket.</p>
<p>Take action</p>	<p>Ask your local bar to stop giving them out.</p> <p>Use the poster from this campaign.</p>	<p>Ask your coffee shop to have a reusable cup offer.</p> <p>Did you know that a 25p levy is much more effective than a 25p discount – because that's how us humans work, we respond to loss-aversion!</p>	<p>Start a no plastic-bag campaign for your local shop – it is only large retailers that have to enforce the 5p charge.</p>	<p>Ask your local takeaway to offer a refill scheme.</p> <p>A takeaway in Bristol offers 5p for returned pots that it washes and reuses.</p>	<p>Highlight the issues with compostable plastics in places where you see them.</p>

Remember these are just suggestions – you can do as little or as much of this challenge that works for you!