



Earth911[®]

More Ideas, Less Waste

[How to Recycle](#)

[Where to Recycle](#)

Inspire & Motivate

Reading time: 2 mins

EarthAction: Conduct a Plastics Inventory



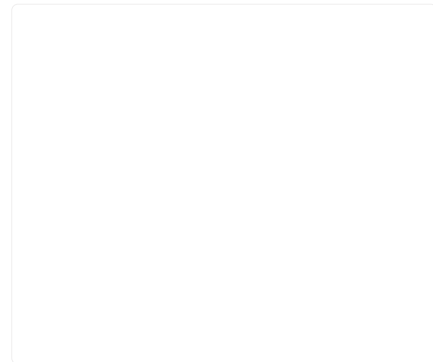
By [Gemma Alexander](#)

© JUN 17, 2022 [earth action](#), [Plastic](#), [plastic waste](#), [single-use plastic](#)



Plastic is a problem in a lot of ways: The fossil fuel-based material generates greenhouse gas emissions throughout its lifecycle; is **rarely recycled**; contributes to **ocean pollution**; and even **accumulates** in the human body. But plastic is so ubiquitous, you can't just wake up one morning and decide to live plastic-free. **Plastic-free living** is hard and must be pursued incrementally. The first step is figuring out where you are by conducting a plastics inventory.

To honor 52 years of action inspired by Earth Day, Earth911

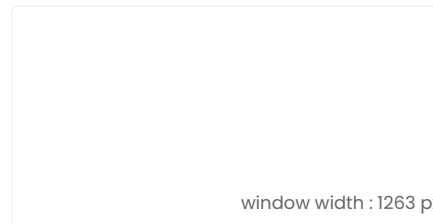
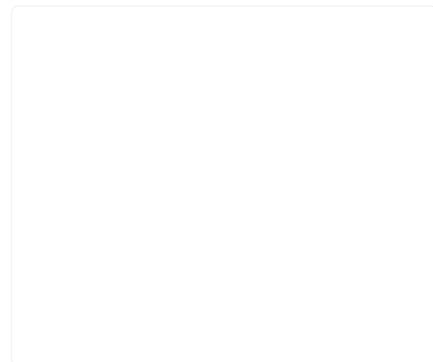


What Do You Think?

Are you considering moving because of climate change?

- Yes
- I'm researching my options to decide
- No

NEXT



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presents 52 Actions for the Earth. Each week from Earth Day 2022 to Earth Day 2023, we will share an action you can take to [invest in the Earth](#) and make your own life more sustainable.

This week, you can invest in the Earth by calculating your plastic use.

Action: Complete a Plastics Inventory

Single-Use Plastic

Completely eliminating all plastic may not be possible for individuals in today's world – after all, most [electronics](#) and even [home appliances](#) are made with some plastic parts. Most [children's toys](#) are made from plastic, too. But one area that individuals can control – and make a meaningful impact – is single-use and disposable plastics. From [product packaging](#) to [water bottles](#) and [toothbrushes](#), our daily lives are filled with plastic items that are designed to be disposed of after one or only a few uses. Most people working towards plastic-free living try to [eliminate single-use plastics](#) one product type at a time. Maybe you already know you have a [zip-top bag](#) problem. But then again, you might be surprised to see where your plastic use piles up. Where do you start?

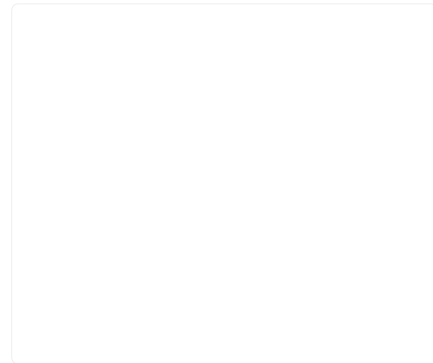
Plastic Calculator

EarthDay.org has developed a [plastic calculator](#) to help you figure out how much plastic you use and dispose of every year and to set your goals for improvement. This week, set aside some time to fill out the two charts in the calculator. The first chart examines single-use items like [cling wrap](#) and [cotton swabs](#), while the second calculates items that are used less often or last a bit longer, like [cleaning containers](#) and [period products](#). The tool will calculate your yearly consumption of each product type.

Once you figure out how much plastic you go through, you can identify which of your habits to change to make the most difference in your personal plastic footprint. When you're ready to take the next step, Earth911 is full of ideas to help you replace disposable plastics. You might decide to buy a [reusable water bottle](#), keep cloth [shopping bags](#) in your car, or carry a reusable [straw](#) and [utensils](#) when you go out. If you're ready for even more action, EarthDay.org has an [online toolkit](#) for eliminating plastic pollution.



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Earth911 Inspiration: Our Future's Vast Possibilities



By [Gemma Alexander](#)

Gemma Alexander has an M.S. in urban horticulture and a backyard filled with native plants. After working in a genetics laboratory and at a landfill, she now writes about the environment, the arts and family. See more of her writing [here](#).

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Earth911 Inspiration: Our Future's Vast Possibilities

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12 Earth-Focused Books To Add to Your Summer Reading List

🕒 Jun 16, 2022 📍 [Maureen Wise](#)

[Food & Beverage](#) [Inspire & Motivate](#)

Maven Moment: Salvaging Cooking Mishaps

🕒 Jun 15, 2022 📍 [Joanna Lacey](#)

Earth911 is a universal resource that helps you find your own shade of green.

We educate and inform consumers, businesses and communities to inspire thought and facilitate earth-positive consumer decisions.

Small changes by thousands of individuals will have a lasting, positive impact. More ideas make less waste!



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