



Queenswood Sustainable Future Centre HR6 0PY  
Open 10.30 am – 3.30 pm Saturdays

## Plastic reduction practical tips - kitchen

Plastic sticks around in the environment for ages, threatening wildlife and spreading toxins. Plastic also contributes to global warming (almost all plastics are made from chemicals that come from the production of planet-warming fuels like gas, oil and even coal). These tips will help you avoid household plastics that can end up in our seas – harming our dolphins, turtles and other wildlife too. And they'll enhance your life by saving you cash and avoiding aggressive chemicals.

### How to avoid plastic in the kitchen

Moving away from plastic products can be a daunting task, but follow these top tips on going plastic-free in the kitchen and you'll never need to wrestle cellophane-wrapped broccoli again! We are not suggesting you throw out all the plastic in your kitchen and replace with plastic-free alternatives right this second. The most environmentally friendly way forward is to use the plastic items you have, and then when they reach the end of their life, look at replacing them with plastic-free alternatives.

Consider it a journey rather than an endpoint to be achieved by next week. Slow and steady wins the race.

### Washing-up liquid with less plastic

You can refill your washing up liquids, laundry liquids and all-purpose cleaners at Ecover refill stations across the UK. Refill stations are becoming more widespread so it shouldn't be too hard to find one near you. If you don't live near a refill station, another option, if you can afford to shop in bulk, is to buy washing-up liquid in 5-litre refill sizes. This costs around £20 and would probably last you a whole year.

### Brushes and sponges

There's a vast assortment of plastic-free tools out there. Wooden dish brushes are a great alternative to plastic brushes. You don't even have to give up the sponge. You can find heaps of plastic-free sponges on the internet that are washable. At the end of their life they can be composted.

Scourers can even be replaced with wooden pot brushes or metal scourers. You can pick these up cheaply in discount/pound shops, and recycle them at the end of their life. (There are some great ones available in the Queenswood shop).

### Plastic-free dishwasher detergent

For the dishwasher most supermarkets sell dishwasher powder that's packaged in cardboard boxes. If you want an eco-friendlier brand of dishwasher detergent, [EcoLeaf dishwasher tablets](#) are wrapped in a water-soluble wrapper that dissolves in your dishwasher – breaking down to carbon dioxide and water. And Faith in Nature makes [dishwasher gel](#) which you can buy in bulk, saving on the amount of plastic packaging.

## Plastic-free cleaning

The cupboard under our kitchen sinks often groans under the weight of all the different plastic bottles for the different cleaning jobs around the home. Glass cleaner, oven cleaner, carpet stain remover, antibacterial spray, stain removal spray...

It is possible to making your own cleaning products. Whilst this isn't entirely plastic-free, it drastically reduces the amount of plastic. The book [Fresh Clean Home](http://moralfibres.co.uk/fresh-clean-home/) <http://moralfibres.co.uk/fresh-clean-home/> has natural cleaning recipes.

Instead of plastic-wrapped kitchen roll for cleaning and wiping why not keep a store of inexpensive dish cloths in a drawer. It's a more frugal alternative to kitchen roll, with the added benefit that the cloths get washed in the washing machine when they're dirty rather than going in the bin, as kitchen roll does.

## Plastic-free food storage

Whilst Tupperware may last longer than a couple of years other plastic containers have a nasty habit of breaking and discolouring. Glass alternatives are very nice but can be quite price so why not replace it with plain old glass jars.

Start small - soon all those small plastic-free changes will add up

Glass jars make for great food storage in the fridge, as you can see at a glance what's inside the jar – helping you reduce food waste at the same time. You can even freeze food in glass jars. Worried about the glass breaking? The trick is, when filling the jars, to leave an inch at the top to allow space for the food to expand when freezing. This will greatly reduce the chances of the glass breaking in the freezer.

## Plastic-free food wrap

If you're after a plastic-free alternative to cling film, there are heaps of low-cost and no-cost options. For leftover food that I want to store in the fridge, cover it with upturned bowls or plates. It costs nothing, is plastic-free, and means I can store stuff on top of the plate or bowl. It's also possible to used pan lids to cover food in the fridge.

Beeswax wraps make great food savers. Simply warm them in your hands and mould them over your bowl or round your food to help keep your food fresh without plastic. They are not suitable for wrapping meat or fish, so instead, place them in a bowl and cover the bowl with the wrap.

Wraps can be a little pricey, so if you're after a thriftier option then you can [make your own wraps](http://moralfibres.co.uk/beeswax-food-wrap-diy/) <http://moralfibres.co.uk/beeswax-food-wrap-diy/> really easily from fabric scraps and a little beeswax. For packed lunches, a few snack and sandwich bags which can be washed in the washing machine or dishwasher to keep them fresh and clean are handy.

## Plastic-free kitchen tools

As plastic items break or run out try replacing them with plastic-free alternatives. Ceramic, glass or metal bowls instead of plastic ones (charity shops are great places to look for these). Wooden or metal utensils instead of plastic ones. Metal straws instead of plastic straws, and so on. (These are available in the Queenswood shop).

No doubt there will be some plastic kitchen items that you will have for life. But it's environmentally responsible to replace perfectly functioning items just because they happen to be made of plastic. Start small – replace things as they run out and soon all those small plastic-free changes will add up.

Sourced from: <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/plastics/living-without-plastic>