

Alternatives to Plastics

Fortunately, there are many safer alternatives to various plastics that are readily available for people looking to avoid as much plastic as possible.

Building Products

Product/Category	Plastic-Free Alternatives
Pipes	Copper (preferably recycled), iron, concrete, steel
Siding	Wood (e.g., clapboard, shingles), brick, stone, stucco, aluminum
Paint	Clay-based paints, linseed oil, lime paints, milk paints, chalk paints
Insulation	Mineral wool, cellulose, hemp, wood fiber, fiberglass
Flooring	Wood, ceramic tile, brick, stone, cork, bamboo
Countertops	Wood, natural stone, concrete, stainless steel, ceramic tile
Windows and doors	Wood, aluminum, steel
Decking	Wood
Roofing	Metal, wood, ceramic tile

Packaging

Product/Category	Plastic-Free Alternatives
Bottles	Glass, aluminum - preferably refillable
Wrappers	Paper, waxed paper, foil
Boxes/containers	Cardboard, paper, metal
Takeout containers	Paper, metal (bring a tiffin or reusable container for to-go foods)
Cling wrap/films	Waxed paper, foil, fabric impregnated with beeswax

Kitchen

Product/Category	Plastic-Free Alternative
Plastic cooking utensils	Metal or wooden utensils
Non-stick cookware, baking sheets, and trays	Copper, stainless steel, cast iron, glass pots and pans, uncoated metal baking sheets

Plastic cutting boards	Wood, bamboo, stainless steel, titanium, glass, stone
Kitchen sponges with plastic scrubber side	Cellulose sponges without a scrubber end; tough-to-remove food can be removed with a bamboo, wooden, or metal scraper after soaking
Plastic bottle brushes and scrub brushes	Wood and natural fiber brushes
Tupperware/other plastic food-storage and freezer containers	Glass mason-style jars or other reused glass or stainless steel containers. Start a secondhand glass jar collection — reuse is even better than recycling.
Plastic produce bags	Cotton produce bags, paper bags; store herbs in a glass jar, or simply go without a bag
Plastic shopping bags	Heavy-duty reusable cotton or hemp totes
Counter, ceramic, and glass cleaner in plastic bottles	Powdered cleaners sold in paper cylindrical containers, concentrated liquid cleaner tablets you hydrate at home in a glass bottle (major companies now sell a full line of counter, glass, and all-purpose cleaners)
Plastic dust pan and broom with plastic handle and synthetic bristles	Wooden handled broom with natural bristles and metal dustpan

Bathroom

Product/Category	Plastic-Free Alternatives
Shampoo, conditioner, body wash, or soap in plastic bottles	Shampoo and conditioner bars, bar soap, plastic-free hand soap to which you add water at home in a glass bottle
Moisturizer, creams in plastic bottles	Products sold in glass, metal, or ceramic bottles
Toothpaste in plastic tubes	Tooth powder sold in a metal tin or glass jar, toothpaste tablets sold in glass or paper. Note that aluminum toothpaste tubes typically contain plastic liners, so you'll want to avoid those if you're looking for 100% plastic-free.
Toothbrush with plastic handle and plastic (typically nylon) bristles	Bamboo-handled toothbrush with natural fiber bristles
Mascara, lipstick, chapstick, etc., sold in plastic containers/tubes	Makeup sold in paper containers or refillable metal or ceramic holders
Vinyl shower curtain	Fabric (non-synthetic) shower curtain or glass shower

	doors
--	-------

Laundry Room

Product/Category	Plastic-Free Alternatives
Plastic laundry basket	Woven natural fiber laundry basket or heavy-duty cotton canvas laundry tote/basket with handles
Laundry detergent in plastic bottle; oxygen bleach in plastic tub; laundry detergent in little plastic pods made with PVA (polyvinyl alcohol), a type of plastic that ends up in the waste water	Powdered laundry soap in a cardboard box that you either order or refill from a local refill shop. Some companies have a great line of powdered laundry detergent and oxygen bleach shipped in paper bags.
Bleach in plastic bottle	White vinegar (in a glass bottle)
Fabric softener in plastic bottle or in dryer sheet form	Wool dryer balls for softening clothes in the dryer. (Fabric softeners may contain a range of toxic chemicals and fragrances , and softener sheets are also made with polyvinyl alcohol, or PVA.)
Synthetic plastics used in clothing fabric, particularly polyester	Natural fibers like cotton, hemp, linen and wool