



MY TOP FIVE STEPS FOR GETTING RID OF PLASTIC



Just in case you get no further than this introduction – you lose the book or don't have time – then in the spirit of being a useful guide for anyone, no matter who they are and what their circumstances are, here are my top five steps for getting rid of plastic, right at the very beginning.

1 Go on a plastic-free shopping spree. Who would have thought in a book about reducing the amount of waste we produce the top advice for getting rid of plastic was to go and buy a few things? Essential items for a plastic-free life include: a nice water bottle, a reusable coffee cup, a tote bag (or even just a backpack) for your shopping, a lunch box and some kitchen storage containers.

2 Go on a plastic-free purge. Start in your bathroom, work your way to the bedroom and then into the kitchen. Have a look at ingredients lists on the back of your cosmetic products to check there aren't any microbeads; empty your cupboards of single-use plastic straws and cutlery. Don't know what to do with it all? You could always send it back to whoever you bought it from with a message that, in your household, single-use plastic is no longer welcome.

3 Do some plastic-free preaching. All of us are way more likely to take advice if it comes from our friends and family, rather than just reading about it in a book or watching it on the television. Pass on handy tips to your friends and neighbours (you could even give them a copy of this book). Spread the good news that a plastic-free life is easier than they think, and every little bit helps.

4 Make some plastic-free plans. It's true that getting rid of plastic takes a bit of planning. Use a rainy day to sit down and work out which shops near you already use less plastic. Do you have a local greengrocer that lets you pack your fruit and veg however you want? If there are only fast-food outlets near your place of work, spend some time making food for a week of packed lunches. Start thinking about your plastic-free routine and write it down in your diary.

5 Start your own plastic-free campaign. Go out in your neighbourhood and see what businesses are using too much plastic, and which ones are the local champions. Talk to business owners about what they could be doing to use less plastic. Why do they only use plastic cutlery and single-use coffee cups? Have they ever thought about using cardboard trays instead of styrofoam? Ask your friends to join you in asking these businesses to change their ways – after all, the customer is always right!

