

International Coastal Cleanup

WHAT WILL YOU FIND?

Food Wrappers

Even though many food wrappers look like foil, most are made of plastic.

★ Try buying in bulk and using reusable containers to store on-the-go snacks.

Plastic Beverage Bottles

In the sun and salt water, plastic bottles become brittle and break into smaller pieces.

★ Opt for tap water or fountain drinks in a reusable bottle.

🕒 Breakdown Time: 450 years

Forks, Knives & Spoons

Volunteers collect enough utensils—more than half a million in one day—to host a picnic for every resident of Washington, D.C.

★ Entertain with reusable forks, knives and spoons made from bamboo or recycled plastic.

Fishing Gear

Abandoned fishing gear can trap and harm ocean life long after it is lost or discarded.

★ Don't leave your line behind; participate in a fishing-line recycling program.

🕒 Breakdown Time: 600 years

Cups & Plates

Foam cups and plates cannot be easily recycled and often crumble into small pieces.

★ Grab a reusable mug that can go from coffee to smoothie with just a rinse.

🕒 Breakdown Time: 50 years

Straws/Stirrers

Volunteers collect enough straws and stirrers in one day to line California's 840 mile coastline.

★ Next time you're out, politely refuse plastic straws or carry your own reusable straw.

Bottle Caps

Plastic bottle caps are one of the most commonly found items in the stomachs of sea birds.

★ Keep your bottle caps to use for art projects or on-the-go games. Checkers, anyone?

Cigarette Butts

The most common item found during beach cleanups, cigarette filters are actually plastic.

★ Properly dispose of cigarettes in receptacles or use a portable ashtray.

🕒 Breakdown Time: 1-10 years

Takeout/Takeaway Containers

Volunteers collect enough containers in one day to get takeout for breakfast, lunch and dinner every day for 858 years.

★ Reuse these containers for tomorrow's leftovers or other storage needs.

Plastic Grocery Bags

Plastic grocery bags pose high risks to sea turtles when they mistake them for their favorite food, jellyfish.

★ Toss reusable bags in your backpack, purse or car so they are handy for every trip to the store.

🕒 Breakdown Time: 1-20 years