

# SO HOW DO I GET COUNTING?

**YOUR HOW-TO GUIDE**

GREENPEACE · EVERYDAY PLASTIC

**THE BIG  
PLASTIC  
COUNT  
16-22 MAY**

Remember to put these dates in your diary!



*"It's ridiculous that we're still swamped with plastic waste when it makes so many of us furious. The natural world can't cope. We need to find out what's really happening to plastic that's supposedly recycled. I'll be joining The Big Plastic Count and I'd urge you to do it too."*

Chris Packham  
Wildlife expert, TV presenter, author and conservationist

**TOGETHER, LET'S INVESTIGATE.**



# WHY IS THE COUNT SO URGENT NOW?

This year, the government is starting to decide on legal targets for reducing plastic waste. But at the moment, there's nowhere near enough information about how much plastic waste leaves UK households, or what happens to it.

The new evidence we gather will be crucial to convince the government to set a target to reduce single-use plastic by 50% by 2025 (by transitioning to reusable packaging which caters to everyone's needs) – and ban dumping UK plastic waste on other countries.

# ARE YOU READY TO COUNT?

Below, you'll find all the information you'll need to prepare for the count, what to do during the count, and how to submit your findings afterwards. It couldn't be easier. Thank you for joining this nationwide investigation into plastic waste – let's solve the UK's plastic problem once and for all.



# WHO STARTED THE COUNT?

The inspiration for The Big Plastic Count is a unique personal experiment carried out by Everyday Plastic founder Daniel Webb in Margate, Kent. Daniel decided to count and categorise all his plastic waste for 12 months and photograph it for a billboard. He was shocked to discover his hoard of plastic waste totalled 4,490 individual pieces of plastic. Daniel says:

**"Having counted my plastic waste for an entire year, I know exactly how powerful this investigation can be in helping to understand the true extent of the plastic problem. The Big Plastic Count is a simple yet impactful way to discover your household plastic footprint, whilst contributing vital evidence to push the government for long overdue change."**

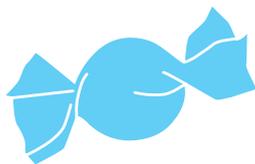
# WHAT'S MY PRE-COUNT PREP?

Print out the PDF Plastic Tally Sheet (below) and familiarise yourself with the kinds of plastics we're counting. Put it up on your fridge, or near your bin or recycling.

Not got a printer? Don't worry, you can tally your plastic waste online from your phone, tablet or computer. Simply bookmark [thebigplasticcount.com/submit](https://thebigplasticcount.com/submit) so you're ready to start tallying on 16 May.

Tell everyone you live with that you're going to be taking part. They can include their plastic waste in the count too.

Help us spread the word! The more people who join in, the stronger the evidence, and the louder our call for change will be. Share this link with your friends, family, colleagues and community so they can sign-up too: [thebigplasticcount.com/join](https://thebigplasticcount.com/join).



## HOW DO I COUNT DURING THE WEEK?

Using the Plastic Tally Sheet, record the different types of household plastic packaging waste you use for one week. This includes plastic going in your bin and plastic you put out for recycling.

Remember to write down any piece of plastic packaging you use while out of your home, then tally it when you get back.

At the end of the count, submit your results by 31 May 2022 at [thebigplasticcount.com/submit](https://thebigplasticcount.com/submit).

## WHAT NOT TO COUNT

**Don't** include: plasters, medication packaging, non-dairy milk/juice cartons, nappies, dog poo bags, plastic cutlery or period products.

We **don't** want to include plastic items that are used for medical or sanitary reasons, or by people with disabilities who rely on plastic items for independence. Also, we are **not** counting coffee cups or Tetra Pak, the plasticised cardboard material that many juice/milk cartons are made of.

For a full list of what not to include, go to [thebigplasticcount.com/help](https://thebigplasticcount.com/help)

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I COUNT?

Once you've submitted your results, we'll calculate your household's plastic footprint, revealing what really happens to it once it leaves your home and showing the true scale of the UK's plastic problem. We'll also share tips on how you might be able to reduce plastic in day-to-day life.

But remember, solving the plastic problem isn't about us feeling bad when we need to use plastic, or just about what we can do individually. We need to stop the flow of plastic production. We need reusable alternatives that are affordable, accessible and appropriate for all. These big changes need to come from the government, brands and supermarkets – and that's what you're helping us prove.

## HOW DO I SUBMIT MY COUNT?

This bit is crucial: once the count is done, enter your results by 31 May 2022 on our website at [thebigplasticcount.com/submit](https://thebigplasticcount.com/submit) or scan the QR code to the right.



# HOW DO I GET MORE PEOPLE COUNTING?

## YOUR OPENING LINE:

"Please join me because we need as many households as possible to take part. Let's uncover the truth about plastic waste – and compare results!"

## THE PROBLEM:

"Nobody really knows how much plastic we're throwing away or what happens to it, and we suspect it's worse than anyone realises. Recycling alone isn't going to solve the plastic problem. There's simply too much of it and our recycling systems can't cope. And right now, there just aren't enough reusable options that work for everyone."

The UK produces more plastic waste per person than almost any other country in the world – only the US is worse.<sup>1</sup>

If things don't change, the amount of plastic produced around the world is set to double by 2040.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Forbes (2020) – [bit.ly/3Kf1Sj0](https://bit.ly/3Kf1Sj0)

<sup>2</sup>Edie (2020) – [bit.ly/3vKZ1Kt](https://bit.ly/3vKZ1Kt)

## THE SOLUTION:

"Greenpeace and Everyday Plastic have launched the nation's biggest ever investigation into household plastic waste. Together, we will uncover the truth about how much household plastic we throw away, and how much is really recycled. This new evidence will be crucial to convince the government, big brands and supermarkets to take ambitious action on plastic packaging."



## FAQ

### How do you know what happens to plastic waste?

We've created a methodology specifically to examine what happens to plastic waste using the best industry and publicly available data from RECOUP and WRAP, two leading authorities in the plastic recycling industry. The data is based on national averages, so doesn't take into account your local collection rates or individual behaviour.

**Who can take part?** Everyone in the UK! Thousands of people, schools and businesses across the country are taking part in this national survey. The more people who join in, the more powerful our evidence will be to push for change.

**Has it been tried before?** Everyday Plastic has successfully piloted this project since September 2019 with individuals, families, community groups, schools, youth organisations and businesses.

**What happens if I miss a day?** Just keep going! When you input your results, we can make allowances for a lost day. However, please do try to count each day, because we need our results to be as accurate as possible.

**How will my data be used?** Any data that you submit will be stored, analysed and used anonymously.

For more info, visit [thebigplasticcount.com/FAQ](https://thebigplasticcount.com/FAQ)



**THE BIG  
PLASTIC  
COUNT**

**LET'S  
COUNT!**

**TALLY SHEET**

Count the plastic packaging you throw away each day, and keep a tally of what type of plastic it is.

Tick off the days as you count your plastic:

M  T  W  T  F  S  S

**Not sure where to put an item?**

Check out our Plastic ID page: [thebigplasticcount.com/help](http://thebigplasticcount.com/help)

**FOOD & DRINK**

	<b>Small bottles (up to 500ml)</b> (water, soft drinks, sauces etc.)	<b>Total</b>
	<input type="text" value="e.g. ###  "/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Large bottles (over 500ml)</b> (water, squash, cooking oil, milk etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Hard plastic caps and lids</b> (from bottles, cartons, jars etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Peelable film lids</b> (from soft fruits, fish, falafels, dips etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Fruit and veg trays, pots and their hard lids</b> (berries, grapes, stir fry, tomatoes etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Fruit, veg and salad bags, wrappers and nets</b> (salad, bananas, cucumber, lemons etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	<b>Black pots, tubs and trays</b> (ready meals, chilled foods, cooked meats etc.)	<b>Total</b>
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Pots, tubs and trays</b> (yoghurt, dips, butter, pastries, meat etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Snack bags, packets and wrappers</b> (crisps, biscuits, cereal bars, chocolate etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Other hard food and drink packaging</b> (coffee pods, plastic corks, polystyrene cups etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Other soft food and drink packaging</b> (rice, bread bags, frozen peas, cling film, cheese etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**CLEANING & TOILETRIES**

	<b>Small bottles (up to 500ml)</b> (hand wash, shampoo, washing up liquid etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Large bottles (over 500ml)</b> (toilet cleaner, bleach, surface cleaner etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Pots, tubs and tubes</b> (moisturiser, suncream, laundry tablets etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	<b>Squeezy tubes</b> (toothpaste, make-up, skincare cream etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Other hard cleaning and toiletries packaging</b> (toothbrush packs, razor packs, mascara etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<b>Other soft cleaning and toiletries packaging</b> (toilet roll wrap, dishwasher tabs, wet wipes packs etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**EVERYTHING ELSE**

	<b>Other hard plastic packaging</b> (plastic packaging for toys, tech, stationery, DIY etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	<b>Other soft plastic packaging</b> (carrier bags, bubble wrap, clothes packaging etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**SUBMIT YOUR RESULTS**

Submit your findings at [thebigplasticcount.com/submit](http://thebigplasticcount.com/submit) or scan the QR code to the right.

For more information, visit [thebigplasticcount.com](http://thebigplasticcount.com)

