

Purge the Plastic: How to Free Your Kitchen of Plastic

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Since its inception, plastic has found its way into our homes and work lives more than most of us recognize. But when it comes to buying, cooking, and storing food, plastic is pervasive. Hundreds of studies have linked plastic to harmful side effects. And while the amount of chemicals leaching from plastics may be small, it has not been proven safe. Thankfully, there are a number of safer alternative materials including ceramics, glass, stainless steel, cotton, wood, and more. Read on to learn how to choose non-plastic swaps for common plastic items such as [food storage containers](#), ice packs, plastic wrap, and produce bags.

Purge the Plastic

How to free your kitchen of plastic.

What's so bad about plastic?

While the amount of chemicals leaching from plastics may be small, this leaching has not been proven safe.

Two of the more well-known chemicals used in plastics are:

BPA

BPA stands for Bisphenol A.

- It is an industrial chemical that's been used in many plastic items since the 1960s.
- BPA can end up in food or leachage from containers that contain BPA.
- BPA-free plastic items can leach harmful chemicals.
- Animal studies show BPA can affect the reproductive system.
- Exposure to BPA can negatively impact the brain, behavior, and prostate gland of humans, infants, and children.

Phthalates

Phthalates are a hormone disruptor.

They have been linked to negative health consequences in the brain and behavior as well as reproductive system damage and cancer.

At the grocery

- Use reusable canvas grocery bags.
- Use reusable mesh produce bags.
- Instead of buying grains, cereals, nuts, seeds, and other staples in plastic packaging, use glass jars, reusable tongs or cotton bags in the bulk section.

At home

- Use stainless cutting boards.
- Store leftovers in glass, ceramic, or stainless steel food containers.
- For lidless containers, cover leftovers with beeswax-coated muslin.

At the office and in the breakroom

- Keep food cool with stainless steel ice packs.
- Store lunch in glass, ceramic, or stainless steel food storage containers.
- Cover food with a paper towel in the microwave.
- Use glass or stainless steel water bottles and avoid coffee mugs.

NOTE:

- For fabric products, look for items that are unbleached.
- For ceramic products, look for items that say the glass does not contain lead.

Plastic has made our lives more convenient for decades—but at what cost? While there's still more research needed to find out how safe (or unsafe) plastics are, glass, stainless steel, ceramic, and other materials can give you peace of mind.

SOURCES:
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