





Plastic-Free Shopping

The Environment

At a Glance

-  30-45 minutes (extensions for 60-min classes)
-  **B2, B1**
-  vocabulary, reading, and speaking

Preparation

-  0-5 minutes
- Print one worksheet for each student.
- Print the Teacher's Insights or keep them at hand as they contain the answers to the exercises.

Exercise Summary

- Kickoff:** speaking intro
- Vocabulary I:** match pictures to descriptions
- Reading:** match personal accounts (paragraphs) to the same descriptions
- Vocabulary II:** identify words and expressions in the previous reading activity
- Speaking:** students give their opinions
- Extra Activity:** if you have extra time, you can hold a debate on plastic-free shopping

Kickoff: Read and answer the questions.

This activity is designed to introduce the topic and allow the students plenty of time to arrive.

1. Do you usually remember to take your own bags when you go food shopping?
2. How much plastic do you bring home each time you go to the supermarket?
3. What brand or supermarket uses the most plastic packaging?
4. Do you know anywhere you can shop without plastic packaging?

Vocabulary I: Match the pictures to the definitions below.

This activity introduces six possibilities for plastic-free shopping in a visual way.



go to a zero-waste shop	buy food in compostable packaging	take your own bag	stop buying unnecessary products	carry a reusable water bottle	shop at your local farmers' market
-------------------------	-----------------------------------	-------------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------	------------------------------------

Picture 1 = take your own bag

Picture 2 = carry a reusable water bottle

Picture 3 = go to a zero-waste shop

Picture 4 = shop at your local farmers' market

Picture 5 = stop buying unnecessary products (here, bottles of water, but in the reading exercise the writer will mention that the 'unnecessary' product for them was soft drinks)

Picture 6 = buy food in compostable packaging (here, untreated cardboard)

Plastic-Free Shopping

The Environment

Reading: Match each account below to one of the definitions above.

Students should aim to understand the paragraphs despite there being some words they may not know. The specific vocabulary activity will come later. Remind students that being able to understand texts without understanding every word is a very important skill to have.

1. It'll sound silly, but I just kept forgetting. I kept meaning to remember, then I'd leave the house, get to the supermarket, and... oops! So, I put it on a hook by my front door. Now, I never forget.
= take your own bag
2. I was a total soft drink addict. I drank three or four a day, sometimes forgetting to drink water. I realised that cutting them out was healthier, cheaper, and meant I could greatly cut down on plastics. Win-win! = stop buying unnecessary products; you may use this to spark conversation
3. I was really happy to find out a few of my favourite products came in biodegradable versions: coffee capsules, which I can't live without; cereal, in "plastic" made from sugar cane; and bin bags. Perfect! I do have to be careful to dispose of them into the designated organic bins, though. If not, they still pollute. = buy food in compostable packaging
4. I found a great little store down the road that sells loads of stuff by weight and without packaging. They gave me some little paper bags that I just reuse every time I go back. For me, it's the perfect solution. = go to a zero-waste store
5. Well, the obvious solution seemed to be "buy local". That's what I did. Every Sunday, I go and buy practically everything I need for the week. It is a little pricier. However, it tastes better, I know where the food comes from, I know where my money is going, and not everything comes wrapped in plastic. = shop at your local farmers' market
6. My city has recently installed plenty of drinking fountains, so I've taken to carrying a flask around with me. I haven't had to buy bottled water in ages! = carry a reusable water bottle

If you have a longer class time, you may wish to ask students to give their opinion on each one.

Vocabulary II: Take another look at the Reading exercise above and find the terms with the following meanings.

- a. In paragraph one, a word meaning stupid. = silly
- b. In paragraph one, a verb meaning to do something frequently, especially unintentionally. = keep doing, keep + ing (keep, kept, kept)
- c. In paragraph two, a phrasal verb meaning to eliminate or stop consuming. = cut sth. out
- d. In paragraph two, a phrasal verb meaning to reduce the quantity of something. = cut down on
- e. In paragraph two an idiomatic expression meaning everybody benefits. = win-win
- f. In paragraph three, a phrasal verb meaning throw away or get rid of. = dispose of
- g. In paragraph four, a colloquial word meaning things or products. = stuff
- h. In paragraph five, a word meaning more expensive. = pricier (from pricey), colloquial

Plastic-Free Shopping

The Environment

- i. In paragraph five, a word meaning with a covering of. = wrapped (in)
- j. In paragraph six, a word meaning a public installation with drinking water. = drinking fountain
- k. In paragraph six, a word meaning a reusable bottle to carry water or hot drinks. = flask

Speaking: Read and answer the questions.

This speaking activity is designed to wrap up the class and allow students to give their own opinions and ideas. Depending on class size, you may wish to do it as a full-class activity or in small groups.

1. Do you think that the measures from the previous activity could help to cut down on the amount of plastic we consume?
2. Can you think of any other win-win situations with regard to plastic-free shopping?
3. Would you give plastic-free shopping a go yourself?
4. What ways could companies incentive shoppers to go plastic-free?

Extra Activity: Hold a debate about plastic-free shopping.

If you have extra time, you can split your group into two teams. You should give them opposing opinions. For example, one group may be opposed to plastic at all costs, and the other may believe we should invest more in better recycling facilities. You can ask the students to prepare some arguments, and then put them into a debate where they try to convince the other team. At the end, allow students the opportunity to give their real opinion.