

EcoBricks

Every minute, one million plastic bottles are used around the world.

That is a LOT of plastic!

It's not just plastic bottles being used though, but bags, food packets and cleaning products all contain this non-recyclable plastic too.

These plastics are called 'single-use' meaning we use these items once and then they are thrown away, as they are not designed to be reusable.

As a result, lots of plastic waste is building up around the world. Plastic is very tough and strong and cannot decompose. Lots of natural materials, such as paper or cotton can decompose, which means that it can break down and then disappear.



Image Credit: tanvi sharma on Unsplash

Plastic never breaks down, but breaks up into little bits and then those bits stay around on our planet forever.

Every bit of plastic that has ever been made still exists on our planet!

All this plastic is hanging around and polluting our planet as it is not recyclable and cannot be put back into the production system to be reused.

Plastic polluting our environment causes problems for animals and birds that often mistakenly eat it thinking that it is food.



FLY:D on Unsplash

While the best solution to this problem of plastic pollution is for humans to just use less plastic, EcoBricks are a great way to trap existing plastic waste and make it useful again!

Lots of projects around the world are starting to collect and use ecobricks to build gardens, furniture and even schools, instead of using regular bricks! You can be part of this brilliant worldwide movement too!

What you will need:

- A plastic bottle with a lid
- Non-recyclable plastic waste such as Styrofoam, plastic bags, crisp packets, cling film, sweet wrappers, straws etc
- Warm soapy water
- Scissors
- A thin stick/dowling rod

Instructions:

1. Save and separate your plastic and give it a good wash in warm soapy water. This is really important! If you make your ecobrick with plastic that is dirty or has food on it, it will start to grow mould and your brick may collapse!
2. Make sure you let your clean plastic dry, you don't want condensation building up inside your ecobrick!
3. Cut your dry plastic into little chunks.
4. Put these chunks inside your plastic bottle.
5. Once your bottle starts to fill up, use a stick to push the plastic down inside it, to make more room. Really give this some welly; it's surprising how much plastic you can squash inside one bottle!
6. Once your bottle is TOTALLY full and you can't fit a single scrap more plastic inside, put the lid on tightly. There you have a completed ecobrick!
7. Now you can decide what you'd like to do with your ecobrick. You can build some more and use them to build dens with, do some loose parts play, create garden features or send it to be part of a bigger project. Check out the photos to the right for some ideas!
8. For more inspiration, or to find out how you can donate your ecobrick to a building project, visit www.ecobricks.org



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