

Plastic Pollution in the Ocean



Plastic Pollution

Plastics are a big problem for ocean life. It is thought that over eight million **tonnes** of plastic finds its way into the ocean every year. It can be anything from plastic bags to food wrappers and even glitter.

How Does It Get into the Ocean?

Plastic which is dropped on the ground can get blown into rivers and streams, which carry it to the sea. If plastic is thrown away properly but is not recyclable, it ends up on a **landfill**. From here, it can be blown into rivers, too. Worst of all, if plastic is flushed away down drains, it goes straight into the water.

Did You Know...?

- Plastic is very strong. It can take up to one thousand years for plastic to break down in the water.
- Plastic in the oceans can be mistaken for food by different creatures. Floating in the ocean, a plastic carrier bag can look a lot like a jellyfish, which is food for a leatherback turtle.



Plastic can look a lot like a jellyfish and could be eaten.

How Can We Help?

There is good news about what is being done and what you can do to help.

- Say 'no' to plastic bags – reuse old bags or carry a backpack.
- Refill and reuse – instead of buying bottled drinks, fill up your own bottles at home.
- Sort your rubbish – use recycling bins, don't put plastic down drains and never leave litter on the ground.

Although plastic is a threat to our world, there are good things happening. It's important to think, reuse and recycle.

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Glossary

landfill – A place where non-recyclable rubbish is piled up and buried.

tonnes – A measurement that is about the mass of a small car.

To find out more about ocean pollution, read the eBook 'A Place for Plastic' [here!](#)

Questions

1. Which of the following are types of plastic pollution? Tick **two**.

- food wrappers
- tin foil
- glitter
- cereal boxes

2. How long can plastic take to break down in the water? Tick **one**.

- up to one thousand hours
- up to one thousand days
- up to one thousand months
- up to one thousand years

3. Number the sections from 1-4 to show the order that they appear in the text.

- Did You Know...?
- How Does It Get into the Ocean?
- Plastic Pollution
- How Can We Help?

4. Find and copy a word from the text which means 'animals'.

5. Fill in the missing words.

Floating in the ocean, a plastic _____ can look a lot like a _____ which is food for a leatherback _____.

6. Draw 3 lines to complete the sentences.

Instead of putting plastic
down the sink...

Instead of using new
plastic bags...

Instead of buying bottled
drinks...

...reuse old bags.

...refill your own bottle
at home.

...recycle it properly.

7. How do you think people's attitudes to plastic may change in the future?
