

Week 5: Bathroom and Personal Care

A plethora of plastic-free and zero-waste personal care products exist, but finding the one's you like might take some experimentation. Check out some of these links for sources for refillable containers and innovative alternative packaging and ingredients.

1. Avoid plastic bottles of liquid soap and hair-care products. Use solid soap bars for hands (like we all used to do), and [solid bars of shampoo](#), or buy hair care items in bulk using your own glass jars, or, for safety in the bathroom, re-use old plastic bottles.

Or try a shampoo that comes in a [returnable aluminum bottle](#); aluminum can be recycled without any quality loss, which means these bottles can be reused indefinitely. (Plastic can only be recycled once or twice before it is sent to a landfill to sit for hundreds of years.)

2. Seek out non-plastic toiletries, such as [bamboo toothbrushes](#). You can even find [toothpaste and mouthwash](#) in glass jars or in tablet form, [plastic-free dental floss](#) and [deodorant](#) in cardboard tubes, bars, and glass jars if you know where to look! Buy cotton swabs with paper sticks rather than plastic. Disposable razors are a big contributor to plastic waste; use a razor with removable blades instead. And shop for [sustainable toilet paper](#) not packaged in plastic!

3. Avoid products with microbeads. [Microbeads](#) are tiny particles of plastic manufactured for exfoliants in body and face scrubs, and toothpastes, to produce a “feel good factor”. Microbeads are also used in some cleaning products. These microscopic pieces of plastic are contributing to the unhealthy ‘plastic soup’ contaminating our seas. Avoid anything with polyethylene (PE), polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA), nylon, polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polypropylene (PP) in the ingredients.

4. Make DIY wet wipes. Those single-use wipes are convenient for babies, but most wet wipes are made with plastic resins like polyester or polypropylene. As such, wet wipes never fully biodegrade, they simply break into smaller and smaller pieces – releasing countless microscopic fibers into the environment. [Try this recipe](#) to make your own disposable paper or washable cloth wipes.

And does it go without saying? Paper diapers are one of the biggest contributors to plastic waste globally. They are typically made from several types of plastic, including a polyethylene waterproof back layer and a polypropylene inner layer.

5. Medicines. The good news is that [alternatives to traditional plastic medicine bottles](#) are now being produced; you can find many over-the-counter medications in glass, paper, or aluminum packaging. And here's instructions for a [plastic-free first aid kit](#)! But we are going to need to ask and ask again before pharmacies switch over for our prescriptions.

6. Bathroom cleaners: Try some of these [sustainable bathroom cleaners](#), or make your own! Tons of “green” bathroom cleaners are on the market, but it's cheaper and just as effective to make your own.

Tub And Tile Cleaner: Combine 1-2/3 cup baking soda with 1/2 cup liquid soap. Add 1/2 cup water and 2 Tbsp. vinegar. Shake before using. Apply with a cloth or sponge and rinse well.

Scouring Powder: Combine 1 cup baking soda, 1 cup borax, and 1 cup kosher salt in a jar. Sprinkle on area to be cleaned, wipe with a sponge, and rinse.

Toilet Bowl Cleaner: Mix 1/4 cup borax or baking soda and 1 cup vinegar in the toilet. Let it sit for 15 minutes (or longer, if necessary), scrub, and flush.

Glass Cleaner: Combine 1/4 cup vinegar and 4 cups warm water in a spray bottle. Use to clean glass or mirrors with a dry cloth or piece of newspaper.

7. Raise Your Voice: Quaker witness results from our practice of integrity. When we speak Truth through both our words and our lives, we provide an example, or witness, to the world about what we believe that Truth to be. Witness calls us to action: If your favorite products are only available in plastic containers, contact the manufacturer and seller and ask for other options.

Queries: How do our lives testify to our convictions as Friends? How do we speak Truth tenderly, so that others may hear it?