

A Week's Worth of Waste

Many of the items you buy are packaged in plastic. You probably open each package, use what is inside, and throw the plastic away without giving it much thought. But what if you saved all of this plastic? How much plastic waste would you accumulate in one short week?

TRY THIS

1. Obtain an empty cardboard box.
2. Weigh this empty box on a bathroom, kitchen, or postal scale. Write down the weight.
3. Collect *all* of the plastic waste produced in your home for a week. Include knives, forks, spoons, cups, and containers, as well as bags, boxes, and wrappings.
4. Wash these plastics and set them out to dry.
5. Crush your clean plastics. If some of them are six-pack rings, carefully cut open all of the loops.
6. Put your crushed plastics in the cardboard box.
7. At the end of the week, weigh this box of plastics on a bathroom, kitchen, or postal scale. Write down the weight.

8. Subtract the weight of the empty box from the weight of the plastic-filled box to determine the weight of the plastic. How much plastic waste did your family accumulate in a week?

9. Use the amount of plastic waste your family accumulated in a week to estimate how much plastic waste your family throws out in a month and in a year.

