TIPS FOR REDUCING YOUR PLASTIC IMPACTS

Shopping for Food

Checkout: Bring cloth bags, boxes, backpacks, baskets, or ask for paper sack. Recycle any plastic ones at Safeway (makes Trex lumber) Don’t buy cheapies: wear out fast, can’t recycle.

Bread: Recycle clean breadbags at Bashas, get in paper sacks from a bakery, or make your own. There are some easy recipes out there.

Canned Food: Most are lined with BPA. Cook your own soaked beans in 30 minutes with a digital pressure cooker (e.g. Instant Pot) and freeze extras in salsa jars.

Condiments: Choose glass over plastic. Make your own mayo etc?

Bottled water & drinks: Don’t buy or accept bottled water unless you really need to. Carry a stainless steel bottle (preferably not painted) or glass. Tests show a taste preference for tap water over bottled! And often it’s more chemical free. Get a filter for home filling.

Frozen foods: Minimize convenience meals, try weekend cookups, freezing extras. Stretchy plastic bags may be best (can wash out and recycle at Bashas’.)

Milk, soup, juice cartons are hard to recycle (take to Phoenix?). So choose those in recyclable glass or plastic, or make your own milk from hemp hearts, nuts or OG soybeans (Mt. Hope). Almond milk: blend 1 c, soaked nuts, 4 c H2O, strain, flavor. We like the SoyJoy soymilk (etc.) maker.

Meat: Little or none due to its eco, health and humane impact, but better in butcher paper or bring your own container than in stretch wrap over styrofoam trays (try Whole Foods).

Produce: Avoid packaged produce. Bring cloth bags or reused plastic bags (recycle oldies at Bashas). Use paper sacks if available? Recycle #1 clear containers for berries and greens.

Staples, snacks, nuts etc: Bulk is best. Weigh & mark clean jars (tare= ounces/16). Fill at Whole Foods or Mt. Hope. Put empties into your shopping box with stickers, marker. Makes for an elegant, efficient pantry.

Vitamins and Supplements: Most bottles can be recycled. If in doubt, choose glass over plastic.

Wine: Choose real or aluminum seals over plastic corks.

Kitchen Care

Cookware: Avoid coated pans. Pots can be recycled.

Cutting boards: Avoid plastic. Wood is naturally anti-bacterial, attractive. Maintain with oil.

Cleaning: Avoid unneeded and often toxic products. A simple all purpose spray cleaner is made from 1 c. vinegar + 4 c. water. Paper towels come in plastic of unknown types and waste trees. Use rags, towels, washcloths etc. Instead of sponges, try a washcloth and a steel scrubber. For rubber gloves try Casabella 100% natural latex gloves (compostable?) or barrier cream.

Leftovers are best in glass salsa jars or all glass storage products like Anchor stackables or Pyrex. Unbreakable, totally recyclable New Wave Environ Stainless Steel containers are superb for freezing, baking and also carrying lunches to go. Cling wrap is from PVC, one of the worst plastics, so cover with a plate or aluminum foil (recycle);

Waste cans: Line with used checkout etc. bags; paper sacks work if you compost food. Used nursery bags for trash?

Eating Out

Tell servers: no straws (major problems).

Disposable cups and plates: Most are not recyclable. Bring your own mug. Hosting events? If hosting an event, seek biodegradable options or use inexpensive glass plates, cups, glasses etc. (Goodwill is a great resource for these).

Cutlery: Rather than plastic or “compostable” ware that is hard to actually recycle, stash a spork smf cloth napkin in purse or pack.

Take Home Food: Bring a container and carry bag if need be. I love New Wave Enviro Stainless Steel Food container (online). Styrofoam clamshells etc. are not recyclable. Nope.

A Better Bathroom

Dental care: Avoid toothpaste tubes (can’t recycle). Herbal powders, Lush Toothy Tabs work fine. Or make your own from toothpowder 3 parts Baking soda, 1 part sea salt, peppermint oil and if available, 1 part MSM and 1/2 part Xylitol. Floss is typically coated in plastic and hard to use or recycle. Instead, try the T-Pik Stringless Flosser (online) or wood toothpicks. A good rub with a washcloth helps remove plaque. Hydrogen peroxide, diluted, makes a great mouthwash (see online formula).

Deodorant: Avoid plastic pushups. Baking soda (+ tea oil?) applied with powder puff works great. Or get a spray type in a recyclable metal or plastic bottle.

Disposable Diapers and Tampons: Use cloth diapers (online or local services) and washable menstrual pads or compostable tampons (natracare.com).

Hand soap: Choose bulk or paper-wrapped bar soap over liquid soaps in plastic bottles. Or make your own by bottling soap scraps in water, let it sit 8 hours, blenderize.

Kleenex: Remove plastic part and recycle cardboard. Far better to use cloth handkerchiefs, easily washed clean, feel better. Online.

Shampoo: Instead of liquid ones in plastic, try JR Liggit shampoo bars (online), which latter swell.

Skin care: Olive, almond or coconut oil in glass work fine.

Shaving: Avoid plastic razors unless you can refill the blade.

Toilet tissue comes in recycle-questionable plastic wraps. If stretchy, maybe recycle at Bashas. Best is to buy cartons online with paper-wrapped tissue of recycled content, such as EcoSoft. Consider personal bidet spray or wash bottle plus washcloth.

Miscellaneous

Large rigid plastic items like nursery pots, bucket, bins, patio chairs, etc can be taken to Sedona Recycles!

Office paper and cardboard are always good recycle items.

Printer ink cartridges can go to either Sedona Recycles or Staples.

Electronics (TVs etc) can be taken to Sedona Recycles (small fee).
