

Waste Week facts

Week 4

DAY
16



DID YOU KNOW? We now use about 20 times more plastic than we did 50 years ago.

- Despite this increase in the amount of plastic being used, there continues to be a decrease in the amount ending up in landfill. This is thanks to end of life management options and growing public awareness.
- If you laid out all the bottles that the UK has recycled in the past 10 years they'd stretch to the moon and back 10 times!
- 94% of all UK authorities now offer collection facilities for plastic bottles either through household recycling collection or at recycling centres - however, that means 6% don't!

Find out about the Lifecycle of a Plastic Bottle on the Pod.

DAY
17

DID YOU KNOW? Each year supermarkets give away enough carrier bags to cover the whole of Birmingham.

- 8.3 billion carrier bags were given away by supermarkets in 2013.
- A plastic bag can take up to 1,000 years to degrade.
- Although plastic carrier bags use 70% less plastic than they did 20 years ago, they are still made from polyethylene (PE) which is derived from non-renewable oil and requires energy to manufacture.

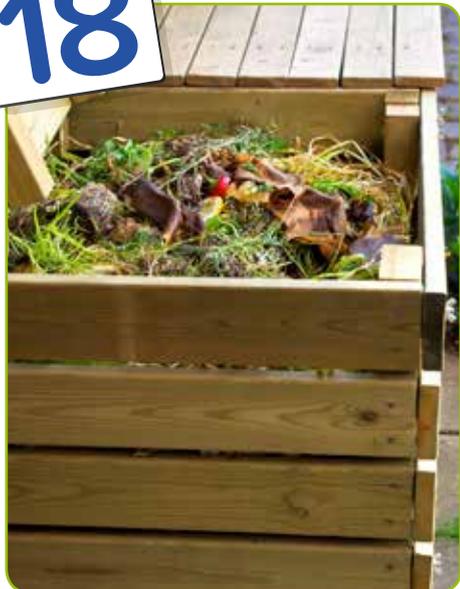


Sources: **Day 16** http://www.plasticseurope.org/documents/document/20111107101127-final_pe_factsfigures_uk2011_lr_041111.pdf, <http://www.recyclenow.com/facts-figures/how-it-recycled/plastic-bottles>, <http://www.plasticseurope.org/what-is-plastic/how-plastic-is-made.aspx> **Day 17** <http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/wrap-publishes-new-carrier-bag-use-figures-0>, <http://www.fizbag.com/info/plastic-bag-facts>

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18



DID YOU KNOW? A worm can eat its own body weight in organic waste each day to create compost.

- When organic waste is sent to landfill, air cannot get to it. Then as the waste breaks down it creates a harmful greenhouse gas, methane, which damages the Earth's atmosphere. However, when this same waste is composted above ground at home or at school, oxygen helps the waste to decompose aerobically which means hardly any methane is produced - good news for the planet. And what's more, after 9 - 12 months, you get free fertiliser for your garden!
- Did you know that as well as uncooked fruit and vegetables you can compost egg shells, shredded paper and used coffee grounds?

DAY
19

DID YOU KNOW? A plastic bottle uses only a third of the materials it did 40 years ago!

- Understanding the properties of different materials can help companies design with recycling in mind. Toyota have changed some



parts of their cars so that they are no longer a mixture of plastic and metal but are just plastic. Not only does this weigh and cost less, but it is far easier to recycle a single type of material than a mixture.

- Today plastics make up 12% - 15% of modern cars. This is expected to increase to more than 20% in the future.
- Plastics are playing an important part in the design of cars - a 5% reduction in the weight of cars can produce a 3% saving in fuel.

DAY
20

DID YOU KNOW? In the UK it is estimated that households waste around 19% of all the food they buy.

- The good news is that in the UK we made a 15% reduction in household food waste between 2007 - 2012. That's enough to fill 2,600 Olympic sized swimming pools! So we're improving but we still have a long way to go!
- £660 million worth of chicken, turkey and duck products are thrown away each year in the UK.

Find out more with the William Wastenot activity at the Pod.



Sources: **Day 18** <http://www.wormaffair.com.au/frequently-asked> **Day 19** http://www.plasticseurope.org/documents/document/2011107101127-final_pe_factsfigures_uk2011_lr_041111.pdf, Toyota **Day 20** <http://feedbackglobal.org/>, <http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/use-your-loaf-and-save-billions>, <http://www.wrap.org.uk/food-waste-reduction>, <http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/hhfdw-2012-main.pdf>