

## **LIFE WITHOUT PLASTIC BAGS?**

Plastic bags are convenient and reliable helpers in everyone's life, we use bags every day when we go shopping, during leisure, at work and we can't imagine how it is possible to live without this invention. When plastic entered our daily lives, it seemed like a revolution - convenient, practical and cheap.

This device has a 100-year history. The conventional packaging bag was first produced in the USA in 1957 [1] and was intended for packaging sandwiches, bread, vegetables and fruits. By 1966, about 30% of bakery products produced in this country were packed in such package. By 1973, the production of bags in Western Europe was 11.6 million pieces. In 1982, plastic bags with a handle ("T-shirts") appeared on sale in the largest shopping centers. Up to 5 trillion plastic bags are used in the world every year [2].

Bags are actively used in the food industry, medicine, construction. However, plastic bags are a danger to the environment and humanity.

Plastic bags are spread all over the planet; they are instantly carried by the wind over long distances polluting rivers, forests and mountains. Tons of plastic fall into the world's oceans every year. It is dangerous to burn such garbage. During combustion, a huge amount of carcinogens are released into the atmosphere, which pollute the air and destroy the ozone layer. Waste recycling is poorly developed. According to environmentalists, only 1 % of polyethylene on the planet is recycled.

Plastic kills 1 million birds, 100,000 marine mammals and countless shoals of fish each year [5].

6 million 300 thousand tons of garbage, most of which is plastic, is dumped into the oceans every year. Captain Charles Moore, who is involved in the sea voyages of the Marine Research Organization "Algalita" (AMRF), concluded that a quarter of the water surface is covered with floating plastic waste [5].

Naturally, package decomposes over 100 to 500 years, so if you do not reduce its production, the entire planet will be overwhelmed with used packages soon.

Various measures are taken to combat plastic pollution. A large number of countries around the world refuse using plastic package and impose fines and taxes for its use and production.

Ukraine is also struggling with this problem and going to abandon the use of packages in 2021-2022. On July 3, in Ukraine, we celebrate the Day without polyethylene; the purpose of this day is to stop using polyethylene at least for one day. However, such action could be extended for a month which could gradually stop polyethylene use.

Some tips to avoid using plastic bags:

1. Buy an eco-bag; it is stylish, fashionable and does not harm the environment.
2. Go to the supermarket with your bags (you can buy them in the store or sew yourself); remember, that one regular trip to the market "brings home" more than a dozen of disposable bags.
3. Use package several times; on average we use one package for 20 minutes but then it lives for more than 100 years on the streets, rivers and mountains. Every

Ukrainian throws out about 500 packages a year. In Europe, this figure is much lower - 90.

4. Buying some products, you can refuse of the package at all; some fruits and vegetables that have their own protective shell do not need to be put into the package (bananas, oranges, tangerines, potatoes, carrots, tomatoes and many others). Also, the package is not required for milk, cheese, flour and other products that have already been pre-packaged.

5. Choose drinks in glass or metal bottles.

6. If there is a choice between buying goods in plastic packaging and ecological (for example, paper), choose the ecological option.

7. Do not take plastic bags at the checkout!

Don't be indifferent - life changes for the better today.

### **REFERENCES**

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