

Clean Fairfax August 2025 Outreach

This August, Prep for a Plastic-Free Fall

If you participated in [Plastic Free July](#), you now know that you can successfully swap out plastics where they sneak into your life - congratulations! Keep the momentum going and look for ways to cut out plastics and single use items in your back-to-school or back-to-work preparations.

Here are a few easy ways to reduce waste and cut down on your exposure to harmful microplastics:

1. Get everyone in the household at least one reusable water bottle and/or hot beverage thermos, preferably stainless steel or glass. Drink from the tap or the water fountain to avoid the microplastics present in bottled water. Also note that [reusing single use water bottles is not recommended](#), especially those marked #1 or #7, due to potentially hazardous chemicals they can release. Remember to keep your reusable bottle or thermos clean, washing regularly with warm soapy water!
2. Buy or repurpose some reusable containers to pack lunches and snacks in. They don't have to be fancy. You can reuse things like pickle jars or spaghetti sauce jars, or buy reusable, tight-sealing glass or metal or silicone containers. Beeswax coated cloth makes the perfect sandwich wrap - we love [Meli Wraps](#) or you can even [make your own!](#)
3. Make two or three reusable cutlery sets for everyone in the household. You can find very inexpensive silverware at thrift stores. Then wrap them up in a cloth napkin with a tie, or find pencil cases that zip up around them. Use these in packed lunches; keep an extra in the car or in backpacks so you're never without them.
4. Check through closets and drawers for leftover paper, pens, and pencils. Instead of buying new plastic-covered notebooks, try making your own [tear-away notebooks](#) from paper, cardboard, and washi tape.
5. Invest in a couple of reusable take-out containers. You can pack your lunch in them and also take them with you when you go out to eat to put your leftovers in (and take those for lunch the next day). This lets you skip the foam or plastic containers at the restaurant, saves food, and cut down on single-use containers. We love hinged silicone reusable containers like the one shown below from [Big Bee Little Bee](#).

Clean Fairfax encourages environmental stewardship and urban sustainability in Fairfax County, Virginia through education, programming and community involvement. Learn more on our website at www.cleanfairfax.org and follow us on social media: IG/X: @CleanFairfax and FB: @CleanFairfaxCouncil.