

Our Plastic Planet

Plastic. A fundamental material to everyday life on planet Earth. The building blocks of our everyday life. It comes in all shapes, sizes and uses and apparently we can't go for 10 short minutes without touching or using something made of plastic. But, although we use plastic so frequently from contact lenses to the bags that we use to carry our weekly shop, plastic is becoming an ever rising, global issue. The truth is, our beloved plastic is so durable and full of strength it makes it hard to break down in the ocean's liquid. To us, oceans all over the world are used as a worldwide recycling system and this has to stop. Currently, over a whopping 12.7 million tonnes of plastic occupies our oceans, these usually include products we take for granted such as plastic bottles, bags, toys and microbeads.

Microbeads are small pieces of manufactured, solid plastic. They are less than 1 millimetre in length. Most are made of polythylene but also of polystyrene and other petrochemical plastics. These microbeads are commonly found in the famous exfoliating products in beauty and skincare stores. Exfoliation involves the removal of dead skin cells on the skin's surface. This is involved in the process of all facials.

Pieces of plastic are endangering animals, littering the seas and are famously appearing in most areas of every continent on the planet. This flow of plastic into our oceans worldwide is on the rise and isn't prepared to stop at the deaths of turtles choked to death by plastic bags mistaken for jellyfish or a dolphin getting entangled in a wad of Tesco's bin liners. We can't let those who do not recycle their plastic products slowly destroy our world, we must take action if it's not too late that is. As citizens of Planet Earth, we must begin to encourage the government and fellow plastic – users such as ourselves to tackle this concerning issue.

Cafés such as Costa and Starbucks have begun to use paper straws instead of plastic ones and some have agreed to refill customers' plastic water bottles to reduce constantly buying plastic

bottles when we want and drink and for it to end up in the oceans. But it's not just up to public places and shops to try and stamp out this problem for good, it is easy to get recycling bins, used to recycle plastic bottles, bags, containers and toys, from your local council so you can do your bit in reducing this problem. Remember nothing you do is too small, you are still helping to get rid of a looming problem, here on Planet Earth.

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From Philips High School

Isobel- 12 yrs old

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