

Tackling the

# Top 10 Sources of Ocean Trash

in the U.S.

## 1 Cigarette Waste

Site dedicated cigarette ash receptacles at regular intervals in public areas and workplaces to help decrease littering and reduce ocean waste. Once collected, these cigarette butts can be recycled or repurposed by dedicated cigarette recyclers to keep them away from landfill and out of our oceans.



## 2 Food Wrappers

Food wrappers come in the form of many different materials, from difficult to recycle polymers to recyclable paper and aluminum, so always check the label - as well as your local recycling regulations - before discarding wrappers into the trash.

*The frequency of dropped litter increases with the distance between trash cans, so make sure there are plenty of waste receptacles available for use!*

## 3 Plastic Bottle Caps

If your local recycling facility does not accept plastic lids for recycling, don't worry!

Some charities and non-profit organizations collect plastic caps and repurpose them into different objects, so why not collect these used caps in dedicated recycling containers ready for donation?

## 4 Plastic Beverage Bottles

Often made from PET (#1) polymers, plastic bottles can be widely recycled into new products such as carpets, furniture and tote bags.

Recycling plastic bottles uses less energy than is needed to create new virgin plastics, so these should be placed into recycling containers wherever possible.

## 5 Aluminum Beverage Cans

Recycling aluminum can help to conserve natural resources, save energy and benefit the environment all-in-one.

To encourage recycling and decrease littering, recycle containers should be sited in areas of high-footfall within workplaces, shopping malls, leisure environments and city centers.

If your state has a Bottle Bill, make sure you take your empty beverage can back for recycling in exchange for a small refund!

## 6 Disposable Straws & Stirrers

Many single-use plastic bans are being implemented across the country to help reduce the negative impact associated with plastic straws.

If you aren't happy about forgoing the straw altogether, why not take advantage of one of the many eco-alternatives available? Compostable straws can be used to sip your soda without the risk of environmental harm, whilst metal straws can be rinsed and re-used as many times as you like!

## 7 Glass Beverage Bottles

Glass does not decompose but can be re-used and recycled multiple times without losing purity or quality, so should be recycled wherever possible.

Recycling glass can help to save energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and conserve natural resources, contributing to a circular economy and benefiting the environment.

## 8 Plastic Grocery Bags

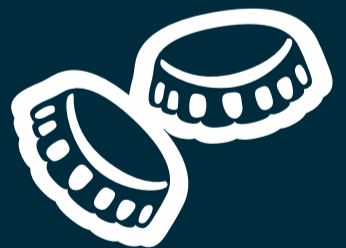
Often made from #2 or #4 polymers, plastic bags can be successfully reprocessed into new plastic bags and recycled to create new polymers at designated recycling centers.

Many grocery stores are now offering take-back schemes, in which you can deposit your used bags into plastic film recycling bins to be given a new lease of life.

## 9 Metal Bottle Caps

When separated from their glass counterparts, metal caps are highly desirable at independent metal recycling centers, so should be collected and separated for recycling.

Some metal lids feature a non-metallic coating, however this is typically burnt off at the melting stage of the process, allowing them to successfully be recycled and recirculated into the economy.



## 10 Plastic & Foam Packaging

Contrary to popular belief, expanded polystyrene foam containers are fully recyclable at designated foam recycling centers. Collect your empty foam containers and take them to your local drop-off facility where they can be successfully recycled and repurposed!

As for plastic packaging containers, why not repurpose them? Plastic pots and tubs can be re-used for a variety of applications, be it to store leftovers or to hold keepsakes, to save them from the trash can and entering our oceans.

*"Together we can help to reduce marine waste and protect our ocean and its inhabitants."*

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Source:

\*The Ocean Conservancy International Coastal CleanUp 2017 – U.S. Results

<https://oceanconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Building-A-Clean-Swell.pdf>