

Age range:



Time needed:



Resources:



Single use plastic causes pollutes the natural environment - make your own Eco Bricks to capture and reuse harmful plastic waste!

You will need:

- Sturdy plastic bottles with tight-fitting lids
- Waste plastic, e.g. styrofoam, polythene bags, packaging
- Sticks, thin enough to fit in the bottle's neck
- Strong scissors
- Kitchen scales
- Permanent markers

Ask young members to collect clean, dry plastic waste to prepare for the activity. If you are going to build with your finished eco bricks, it works best with bottles that are the same size and shape.

INSTRUCTIONS

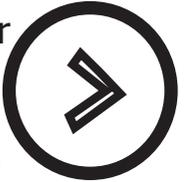
1. Before you start, make sure that the bottles and the plastic are clean and totally dry - otherwise your finished eco bricks could go mouldy.

2. Choose a suitable bottle for each person - a large (1.5l) bottle is good but will take a long time to fill, so you may wish to start with a smaller 500ml bottle.

3. Fill the bottle with waste plastic by pushing it through the neck, and pack it down with the stick, being careful not to damage the walls of the bottle. If you have a mix of different plastic types, alternate these as you go along.

4. Weigh your bottle to make sure you are packing it tightly enough - if it is going to be strong enough to build with then the weight in grams needs to be at least a third of its capacity in milliliters (e.g. a 1.5l bottle should weigh at least 500g when full)

5. When complete, put the cap on tightly. Finished eco bricks can be used (either on their own, or with other materials) to create a range of structures for indoor or outdoor use. There may be a community project in your area that is collecting eco bricks for a larger construction project - find details on the eco bricks website.



GROUP DISCUSSION

Explain that by sealing compacted plastic inside a durable bottle, we are both creating a potentially useful building material, and capturing plastic that would otherwise go to landfill.

Discuss how plastics end up in the oceans, and what problems this causes for wildlife and the wider environment. What else can we do to reduce the amount of plastic that ends up in the natural environment?

Instructions, building ideas and a map of drop-off points for finished eco bricks are available at www.ecobricks.org