

BBC 6 Minute English - Can we live without plastic?

Level: B2 | **Duration:** Approx. 6 minutes

Link: https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/6-minute-english_2023/ep-231214

WARM-UP

Think about your daily life and answer these questions:

1. How many plastic items do you use every day? **a) 1-5 b) 6-15 c) 16+**
 2. What plastic item would be most difficult for you to live without? _____
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PREDICTION

Look at the title "Can we live without plastic?" and predict:

1. The speakers will say living without plastic is: **a) impossible b) difficult but possible c) easy**
 2. The main problem with plastic is: **a) it's expensive b) it pollutes the environment c) it breaks easily**
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KEY VOCABULARY

Instructions: Match the words with their definitions. Write the letter next to each number.

1. single-use plastic ____
2. microbeads ____
3. synthetic ____
4. biodegrade ____
5. unsightly ____

- a)** ugly and unpleasant to look at
 - b)** tiny plastic particles in beauty products
 - c)** plastic designed to be used once then thrown away
 - d)** man-made, not natural
 - e)** break down naturally without harming the environment
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WHILE LISTENING

Task 1: Listening for Gist

Instructions: Listen to the whole programme. Choose the best summary.

The programme is mainly about: **a)** Why plastic was invented in the 1950s
b) The environmental problems plastic causes and possible solutions
c) How to recycle plastic products at home

Task 2: Listening for Specific Information

Instructions: Listen again and choose the correct answers.

1. How much plastic waste goes into oceans each year? **a) 11 million tonnes b) 40 million tonnes c) 1 million tonnes**
2. What percentage of plastic pollution comes from single-use plastics? **a) 11% b) 40% c) 50%**
3. Neil's quiz question: What was the first item made from plastic? **a) hairbrushes b) shopping bags c) snooker balls**
4. Dr Sherri Mason says plastic doesn't biodegrade because: **a) it's too expensive b) nature doesn't know what to do with it c) it's too strong**
5. The plastic-eating bacteria mentioned is called: **a) Rhodococcus ruber b) Rhodococcus rubber c) Rhodococcus river**

Task 3: True, False, or Not Given

Instructions: Listen once more. Write T (true), F (false), or NG (not given).

1. Plastic became popular in the 1950s ____
 2. Microbeads can pass from mother to baby through breast milk ____
 3. Paper bags biodegrade within days ____
 4. All plastic-eating bacteria live in water ____
 5. Scientists think recycling is more important than reducing plastic production ____
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POST-LISTENING

Task 1: Comprehension Check

Instructions: Choose the correct answer based on what you heard.

1. According to the programme, the main solution to plastic pollution is: **a) better recycling b) plastic-eating bacteria c) reducing plastic production**

2. The original purpose of plastic was to: **a) replace natural materials b) make life easier c) create jobs**

Task 2: Vocabulary in Context

Instructions: Complete the sentences with words from the Key Vocabulary section.

1. Many beauty products contain _____ that pollute rivers.
 2. Plastic is a _____ material, not found in nature.
 3. Plastic bags are _____ - you use them once and throw them away.
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HOMEWORK

Plastic Detective Challenge

For one day, count all the single-use plastic items you use or see. Make a simple list:

- Morning: _____
- Afternoon: _____
- Evening: _____

Then think: Which THREE items could you easily replace with non-plastic alternatives? Be ready to share your ideas in the next class!

ANSWER KEY

Warm-up: Personal answers

Prediction: Personal predictions

Key Vocabulary: 1-c, 2-b, 3-d, 4-e, 5-a

Task 1: b

Task 2: 1-a, 2-b, 3-c, 4-b, 5-a

Task 3: 1-T, 2-T, 3-F, 4-NG, 5-F

Post-listening 1: 1-c, 2-a

Post-listening 2: 1-microbeads, 2-synthetic, 3-single-use plastic