

ISSUE 01

AUG 2023

# circ

FOR THE MINDFUL CONSUMER.



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# Take, Make, Dispose.

## The Toxic Cycle of Modern Day Consumption

Our modern society is stuck in a never ending cycle of taking, making, and disposing. Consumers are consuming more than ever, and the economy is fueled by this. Our economic growth is inherently tied to producing more and consuming more.

However, although this take-make-dispose cycle spurs economic growth, it has dire ecological and social consequences. Let's take a look at some of the problems with this cycle of modern consumption.

### Take

Take refers to the process in which natural resources are extracted from the planet in and put into the production process. With the planet's resources being finite, over consumption has already led to irreversible ecological impacts.

### Make

Raw materials are often combined with chemicals and synthetics to create the end product on store shelves. Pollution at this stage presets ecological and social impacts.

### Dispose

So why do we dispose of so many products? They are designed to be disposed of. Producers design products with short life spans and single purposes to make sure you keep on buying more and more.



# RECYCLE



# The (Short-Lived) Life of Plastics in the U.S.

Environmental Consequences of the Linear Plastics Economy Produces

Plastics are everywhere. This cheap and durable product has been mass-produced due to its economic benefits and versatility. Many of the world's largest plastic manufacturers are located in the United States with 121.4 billion pounds of plastic being produced in the U.S. in 2019 (Statistica, 2023).

The consequence of this massive and continual uptick in plastic production is that plastic pollution contaminates nearly every ecosystem on the planet and impacts not only the environment but our human health as well. Whether the plastic is floating in massive garbage patches in the oceans or is broken down into microplastics that can enter the human bloodstream, the effects are far-reaching.



So, how is it that all of this plastic ends up where it isn't supposed to be? In a study conducted, it was found that not only is the United States one of the largest producers of plastic, but they are also one of the largest contributors to the problem of plastic pollution, despite being a high-income country with robust waste management systems.

As reported by the Environmental Protection Agency, 75.4% of plastic waste ends up in landfills, 15.3% is incinerated, and only 9.3% is recycled. Of the 9.3% that is recycled, the majority is exported across the globe for trade. The importing countries are predominantly lower-income countries with less adequate waste management systems, which can lead to further pollution (Law et al.).

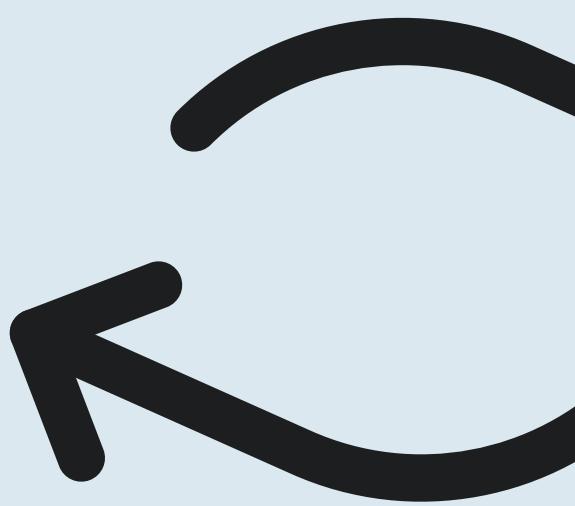


## So, how can I help the problem as a consumer?

Promote a circular economy! Circular economies are economic systems that replace product end-of-life with the concepts of reducing excess consumption, reusing products, and recycling materials.

See the next page for some tips to make you a more mindful consumer →

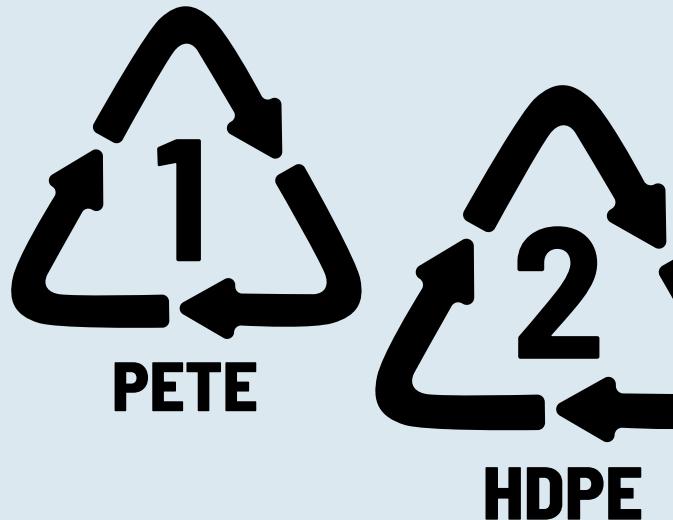
# CIRC Economy: Tips & Tricks



Swap this... for that.



Swap your single-use plastic bottles, containers, shopping bags, etc. with a reusable option.



Know what is recycled in your area before just throwing things into the recycling bin. Sometimes not all plastics are accepted so do your research. Rule of thumb: 1 & 2 are the easiest forms of plastic to recycle



Costco just became your new best friend, buy in bulk! Buying in bulk generates less plastic waste and is a better alternative. Even better if you can shop at a zero-waste store.

**Check out where to shop sustainably  
in your state here →**

# The CIRC5

# The CIRC Top 5

The **CIRC5** are our top 5 picks of companies who have been successful in promoting a circular economy and decoupling economic growth and waste generation to create a healthier and happier planet and society.



## Too Good To Go

Too Good To Go is an app that tackles the problem of food waste through letting you "rescue" unsold food at your favorite restaurants at the end of the day. You can enjoy your favorite foods at a 1/3 of the price while feeling good about reducing waste. In March 2023, the company announced they reached the huge milestone of saving 200 million meals from going to waste across their 17 countries of operation. Bravo!

## Girlfriend Collective

Girlfriend Collective is an athleisure brand that prides itself on producing stylish workout clothes made from recycled materials like water bottles, fishing nets, and fabric scraps. On each product page, you can find the respective recycled items that the item was made with. In addition to creating their new clothing from recycled materials, ReGirlfriend is their program that encourages consumers to send their old worn leggings back for store credit. They'll make "new stuff out of old stuff... out of old stuff."



# The CIRC5



## threadUP

threadUP is one of the largest online platforms for purchasing second-hand clothing. The company is rooted in circularity and continuously is working to innovate the ways the world consumes. In an effort to help consumers become more mindful of our shopping habits, threadUP recently released a fashion footprint calculator to help us understand how our choices affect the larger environmental and social ecosystems.

[Check out the calculator here →](#)



## Buffy

Buffy is on a mission to "help you live comfortably - without making our planet uncomfortable." Their bedding is made up of three main components: eucalyptus pulp fiber, recycled PET, and hemp. If you are looking for a new dreamy comforter with a 9% lower carbon footprint than conventional bedding, check out Buffy.



## superzero

Luxury haircare doesn't have to come at a cost to the environment. superzero is a company on a mission to accelerate the transition sustainable beauty by using clean and vegan ingredients that your hair will love. Zero microplastics, zero plastic packaging, and 90% less carbon emissions. Your hair and the planet with thank you.



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