



Talking Trash & Taking Action: 6-Week Trash Free Challenge!

The 6-Week Trash Free Challenge is a fun competition to form new habits that will prevent trash from entering our ocean. Recruit your class, family or friends to see who can make the most changes in their daily lives. For extra points and impact, continue the habit from the previous week in addition to the new challenge. At the end of 6 weeks, the person with the most points wins and is declared “Trash Free Challenge Champion!”

Week 1: Take a Stand on Straws Challenge

Use as few single-use straws as possible. Tip: Next time you’re out, tell your server to hold the straw.

Motivation: One straw may seem small, but consider this: On one day, Ocean Conservancy found enough straws on beaches for one person to toss out a straw every day for almost 1,500 years.

Points: 2 points every time you have a drink with no straw or a reusable straw. -1 point for every single-use straw you use.

Week 2: Hydrate Without Waste Challenge

Use as few single-use beverage bottles and cups as possible. Tip: Save money and avoid waste. Fill your bottle with water or fountain drinks on the go. Motivation: Beverage bottles and cans along with caps and lids are among the top 10 trash items found on beaches.

By using your own bottle, you eliminate the possibility of it becoming ocean trash—and save money in the process. Points: 3 points every time you use your reusable mug or bottle at a coffee shop or soda fountain instead of receiving a single-use cup. 2 points every time you fill up your reusable water bottle with water. -2 point for every single-use beverage bottle used. -1 point for every single-use cup used throughout the week.



Week 3: Taper Your Takeout Challenge

Have as few meals in disposable containers as possible. Tip:

Hungry? Enjoy your lunch break and savor your favorite meals “for here” rather than “to-go.”

Motivation: In 2013, International Coastal Cleanup volunteers picked up more than 414,000 takeout containers—that’s enough for one person to get takeout for breakfast, lunch and dinner every day for the next 375 years. Points: 2 points for every meal eaten at home or at a restaurant with reusable dinnerware. 1 point for every takeout container that is composted or that you find a new use for (such as storage) -1 point for every disposable takeout container used and thrown away.



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Week 4: Recharge It! Challenge

Recharge your Trash Free Challenge! You receive double points for Challenges 1–3 this week. Also, survey your home and office and take inventory of your rechargeable battery supply. See if there are ways to reduce your impact. Tip: Need batteries? Opt for rechargeable ones and keep disposable alkaline batteries out of the trash. Motivation: Every year, Americans throw out more than 165,000 batteries. By replacing single-use batteries with rechargeable ones, you're keeping them out of landfills and saving money. Points: 3 points for every rechargeable battery you can find or purchase this week for electronics needs. 2 points for learning about your office and/or your community's local battery and electronics recycling programs. Recharge your Trash Free commitment this week, no negative points!

Week 5: Pack a Waste-Free Lunch Challenge

Try to limit the amount of disposable items used for your breakfast and lunch. Tip: Bringing lunch to work today? Use reusable utensils and containers to reduce your trash impact. Motivation: Over the last 28 years, Ocean Conservancy volunteers have picked up enough cups, plates and utensils to host a picnic for 2.15 million people. That's a lot of waste you can keep out of the landfill! Points: 5 points every time you have a meal where there is nothing to throw away after you are finished. 2 points for every time you are able to switch out a single-use lunch box item for a more sustainable option. For example, use washable pouches for chips instead of single-serving bags. 1 point for every reusable container and/or utensil used for your meal. -1 point for every piece of trash (chip wrapper, candy wrapper, plastic bag).



Week 6: Buy in Bulk Challenge

Try purchasing products in larger quantities to save on packaging and money. Tip: Fill reusable containers with bulk items like rice, coffee or nuts at your local grocery store. Motivation: Packaging isn't the only thing you reduced—you saved money, too! A recent study shows consumers can save an average of 89 percent by shopping for their natural and organic foods in the bulk aisle. Points: 5 points every time you bring your own container to the grocery store for bulk purchases. 2 points for every time you choose to buy products in bulk rather than in single servings. -1 point for every purchase of pre-packaged single-serving items. We are talking about you, plastic wrapped prunes, snack bag chips, and pre-packaged carrots and ranch.