

Rubbish!

We've all seen litter lying around on pavements, tangled in trees or floating in the sea, and although it's a sad sight, we can do something about it!

Why not organise a litter pick in your local area to see how much rubbish you can collect? This could be a small litter pick along your street or in your garden, or you could try and clean up a whole beach or park!

You will need:

- An adult to accompany you
- Some bin bags
- A litter picker or some gloves
- Hand sanitiser



Remember you should always be safe when litter picking, so do not collect anything that could be harmful to you, like broken glass or dog poo!

When you are collecting litter, try and think about where it may have come from and what material it is made from. Is any of it recyclable? Is any of it made from natural materials, like cotton, for example?

Once you have completed your litter pick, try and recycle anything that you can, and safely throw the rest of the rubbish in the bin. Be sure to wash your hands very well afterwards!



Rubbish Game

To play this game, you have to try and guess how long it takes for different types of rubbish to 'decompose' that means break down into little pieces and disappear forever.

You will need:

- A big piece of paper and a pen
- Some 'rubbish' : a piece of paper, cardboard, a cotton sock, a rubber welly, fruit, plastic bubble wrap, plastic straws, a nappy, a polystyrene cup and a plastic bottle.

Don't worry if you can't find these exact things, use the images below or draw them instead.



1. On your big piece of paper, draw out a timeline with these amounts of time on it: 1 month, 2 months, 1 year, 100 years and NEVER! Make sure to leave lots of space in between each amount of time.
2. Now, you must think about how long it could take for each of these to decompose and put them in the right place on the timeline. Check your answers on the next page!

Clues:

- Paper:** Made of a natural material from trees. Breaks down even faster than cardboard.
- Cardboard:** Made of a natural material from trees. Breaks down really quickly when wet.
- Cotton sock:** Made of a natural material. Breaks down faster than some other materials.
- Welly:** Made of a natural material from trees. Takes a while to break down.
- Fruit:** Broken down quickly by bugs and bacteria!
- Bubble wrap:** Made of plastic. Rips and break up into little pieces.
- Straws:** Made of plastic. Small and light so easily gets washed through sewers.
- Nappy:** Made from cotton and covered in soft plastic, never completely breaks down.
- Polystyrene cup:** Breaks into tiny pieces but never goes away. Ends up in the ocean.
- Bottle:** Made of p.e.t plastic. Breaks into tiny pieces that can end up in the food chain.

Answers:

1 month: paper, fruit

2 months: cardboard

1 year: cotton sock

100 years: rubber welly

Never: polystyrene cup, straws, bubble wrap, plastic bottle, nappy.

Did you notice that the natural materials (fruit, paper, cardboard cotton sock, rubber welly) take relatively short amounts of time to break down and decompose completely?

All these materials are made from plants and so are able to decompose and return to the Earth. In contrast, the synthetic materials (drinks bottle, straws, nappy, polystyrene cup, bubble wrap) will only break down into microscopic pieces and not decompose.

