



It really doesn't matter where plastic shopping bags end up because technically they will **ALL** eventually end up as litter.

Mostly all single use plastic shopping bags end up in a *landfill (those that do not end up as public litter) where they are buried in an air tight tomb and may never breakdown. Those that do breakdown degrade to spread their **toxic ingredients** to the surrounding environment; decade after decade. For example, here are some common additives in plastics: phthalates (softeners), lead, organotin, cadmium (heat stabilizers), brominated flame retardants, and bisphenol-A (recently declared toxic by Health Canada).

Note:

“Every piece of plastic ever made is still here”⁶



*Landfill:
Acres of our land designated to hide the vestiges of our *society of convenience*.

⁶ <http://www.algalita.org/pdf/plastics%20are%20forever%20english.pdf>

TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

“Regulations against plastic bags often have been driven by very local concerns.”⁸
- Jennifer Clapp, The Globe and Mail

“The Washington-based Worldwatch Institute estimates that 500 billion plastic shopping bags are distributed and discarded every year, each of which can take up to 1,000 years to break down.”⁷

Hold on a second ... how do we know it takes that long for a plastic bag to break down?

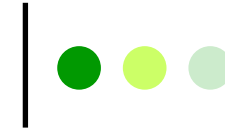
The most common type of plastic shopping bag—the kind you get at supermarkets—is made of polyethylene, a man-made polymer that microorganisms don't recognize as food. Although standard polyethylene bags don't biodegrade, they do photodegrade. These figures (500 to 1000 years) are just another way of saying "a really, really long time."

For a more complete explanation please visit:
<http://www.slate.com:80/id/2169287/nav/fix/>

Created by Michelle Arseneault

⁷ <http://www.igloo.org/>

Together we can Eliminate the Distribution of Single Use Plastic Shopping Bags



"Paper or plastic? Neither. It's easy to get into the habit of bringing reusable cloth bags with you when you do your grocery shopping. Reusable bags have less of an environmental impact than disposable paper or plastic bags, and they are often stronger."¹

Dr. David Suzuki



For more information please visit
www.onelessplasticbag.ca

¹ <http://www.smartbag.ca/news.cfm>



Single Use Plastic Shopping Bags



The Myth of Recycling!



The Problem ²

Plastic bags are:

- Made from petroleum, a non-renewable resource.
- A serious litter problem since they are lightweight and hard to contain (blow around).
- Non-biodegradable, breaking into smaller particles BUT never fully disappearing.
- Mistaken for food by marine animals (particularly sea turtles).
- One of the most numerous items of litter along with cigarette butts and Styrofoam.
- A major part of waste in our landfills.

“Plastics don't actually recycle. Instead of being reformed back into the original products, they are reprocessed into secondary (and usually non-recyclable) products. This is due to several factors including structural & chemical sensitivity, the extremely low cost of virgin plastics, poor product design and materials policy.” ³

Recycling is **not** the answer to our plastic bag problem!

Paper or Plastic? Neither!

“From a life-cycle perspective, production of paper bags takes more energy and uses more water in processes that produce more waste. They are heavier, less versatile and less convenient.” ⁴

Paper bags are **not** the answer to our plastic bag problem!

What you can do! ⁵

- Think twice about taking a plastic bag if your purchase is small and easy to carry.
- Keep reusable bags in your home, office, and car so you always have them available when you go to the supermarket or other stores.
- Ask your favourite stores to stop providing bags for free, or to offer a discount for not using the bags.
- Encourage your local politicians to introduce legislation taxing or banning plastic bags.

² <http://www.earthresource.org/campaigns/capp/capp-sea-turtles.html>

³ <http://www.ecologycenter.org/ipf/recycling/index.html>

⁴ http://www.resourceconservation.mb.ca:80/news/Policy/bags_jan08.html

⁵ <http://www.worldwatch.org:80/node/1499>