

Slim Your Bin Challenge

Would like to save some cash and help the Environment? If so – go for it.

The Challenge

The aim is to make a 90-litre dustbin, for non-recyclable waste, last 4 weeks before it needs emptying. For those with a 240-litre wheeled bin it should only be about a third full after 4 weeks.

Reason for the Challenge

- Waste is not waste it's a resource.
- If we continue to keep digging up resources and disposing of them after a short useful life, they will eventually run out. Long before that they will become scarcer and more expensive.
- Digging them up, transporting, processing, manufacturing the products, using the products, and finally disposing of them all produce dangerous global warming and environmental polluting emissions.
- For these reasons we must Preserve Resources for us, our children, grandchildren, and future generations.

How to Meet the Challenge

These are a few examples on how 'Bin Weightwatchers' can get down to a 90-litre bin emptied only once in 4 weeks. You will be able to come up with many more to suit your situation.

Resource Avoidance

- Only buy, or do, stuff you really need.
- Do you really need to buy bottled water? The water costs you some 500 times the cost of tap water. You must pay for the single use plastic bottle. Avoiding the plastic bottle saves some 3 times its weight in Global Warming emissions. A refillable water bottle will pay for itself financially and environmentally in a very short time.
- Similar issues relate to takeaway coffees in single use cups.
- Try to avoid impulse purchases of electrical items, toys, etc, even if they are cheap, they can be financially expensive if they don't last and inevitably lead to more environmental harm.
- Wherever possible avoid single use or short use products and packaging.

Resource Reduction

- Only buying clothes or textiles you really need. Textiles production emit 23 times their own weight in Global Warming emissions. Carefully buying fewer things of long-lasting good quality not only help save the endangered environment but saves money.
- There is huge scope to reduce the amount of food purchased. Going to the shop with a list of necessities helps.
- Try to avoid buying too much perishable food that could become unsafe to eat and be wasted.
- Try to carefully measure prior to buying things for a DIY project to avoid getting too much.
- Going meatless, even for just one day a week, will help the environment and save you cash.

Resource Reuse

- There is huge scope for reuse.
- Rather than buying new, see if a pre-loved or second-hand product fit the bill. You could try an online site, charity shop, boot sale, groups, or friends and relatives.
- If you have items that you need to discard, that are not at the end of their useful life, consider donating them or selling them. You can donate them to family friends or neighbours. There are also many charity shops and jumble sales and various groups that may welcome the gift. Some charities

can collect and deliver bulky items. There are also many online sites where you can buy, sell, or donate items.

- Rather than buying some tools, equipment, even toys, there is scope to borrowing from family, friends, colleagues, or neighbours. There are also organisations that hire out things.

Resource Recycling

- If you fully and properly use all the Council door to door recycling and Household Reuse and Recycling Centres you will be well on your way to meeting the Slim Your Bin Challenge.
- The biggest volume of material left in your bin will be plastic film. Currently the Council do not recycle Plastic Film. Some plastic film can be recycled at local shops and supermarkets.
- However, there is likely to be plastic film that is not recyclable. Until we can reduce the amount of non-recyclable plastic film it will help to reduce its volume. Even if it is squeezed prior to going into the bin it is likely to spring back. One way is to squeeze residual plastic film into a small non-recyclable plastic bag. In this way it does not spring back in volume

Go for It

It can be done. You know you can do it. It doesn't have to happen overnight.

If you have any questions, please let us know and we will try to answer them in the BEN Newsletter.

Please let us know how you get on with any tips you can share. We can use these to help others Slim Their Bin and Preserve Resources for a sustainable future.

Just go for it and enjoy the challenge. If you do – please spread the word.