



RUN EVENTS WITH LESS SINGLE-USE PLASTIC



There are a number of ways you can make staff socials, meetings, conferences and other events greener, simply by using less single-use plastic. Why not try a few of the ideas below?

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Food and drink

- Use reusable plates, cutlery, cups or mugs which can be washed up after the event.
- Although it might seem like more effort, using reusable items will be cheaper in the long run and will reduce the amount of litter from the event. For example, at the Maldon Smoke & Fire Festival in August 2019, they banned single-use plastic cups. Instead, the bars and food outlets provided customers with reusable cups.
- If you're worried about breakages, invest in some plastic/shatter proof plates and cups which can be reused at each event and stored in-between
- Run an amnesty with staff might be a great way to get a stock of reusable plates and cups if you don't already have some
- If swapping to reusable alternatives is not an option at this time, the next best alternative is to switch from single-use plastic cutlery to more sustainable options such as bamboo or wood. For plates, use paper over polystyrene
- Ban the use of single-use straws
- If you're providing food, think about either buying in bulk to reduce packaging, or choose a supplier who is more environmentally friendly.
- If you're providing or selling hot drinks, offer staff/customers a discount for using a reusable cup and remind them ahead of the event. It will help reduce the amount of washing up and single-use coffee cups from being thrown away at the end of the event!
- If you're providing or selling cold drinks, think about using a jug for water and reusable cups. If you're selling drinks, opt for easily recyclable packaging such as cans. In 2019, Glastonbury banned all single-use plastic bottles. This meant that their vendors had to sell all soft drinks in aluminium cans.
- If you're booking external caterers, try looking for companies that supply food in minimal packaging to help reduce waste

Venues and locations

If you're hosting an event at an external venue, sometimes you may not have much choice over what products they may sell, or whether they use single-use items such as plastic cups or disposable coffee cups. A great way to help reduce single-use plastic at your event is do some research into the venue before booking. If possible, try to find somewhere that has reusable options such as mugs for hot drinks and glasses for water. It's also good to use venues that have recycling facilities so that if there is any unavoidable plastic being used it can be correctly recycled.

Giveaways and prizes

Goody bags and giveaways are often big contributors of unnecessary plastics at events. In an ideal situation you wouldn't hand out giveaways. However, if you are, why not think about opting for more sustainable items and go for quality over quantity. Try and think about items that people will use after the event.

It may not be easy to reduce all the plastic at your event but swapping a few single-use items for reusable or recyclable items can make a big difference.

Tell us what you've done to reduce waste at meetings or events

If this is something your organisation has done, make sure to let us know and share your great ideas!