



World Oceans Day

Upcycling Guidebook

8 June | WorldOceansDay.org

Introduction

The World Oceans Day Youth Advisory Council is extremely excited to present to you this Upcycling Guidebook for World Oceans Day. Before making these upcycled products, we have some quick background points that will help you along the way.

What does upcycling mean:

The term upcycling is also known as “creative reuse.” It is the process of transforming waste materials, by-products and unwanted products that are bound for the trash, into new materials or more useful products with higher value and quality.

Why is upcycling important:

Plastic pollution is a global crisis. Due to our overuse of single-use plastic, we are polluting our natural environment which is harming wildlife. By reusing plastic, upcycling helps reduce the amount that can end up in the environment and may help us avoid purchasing new plastic products. The more we can refuse single-use plastic and reuse what is already out there, the more sustainable our future will be. Together we can prevent plastic pollution!

Obtaining the materials for projects in this guide book:

To obtain materials for the projects in this guide, save your recycling or ask friends and family for donations of their recycling.

Since the ultimate goal is to reduce the amount of new plastic being produced, you should not go out and purchase plastic in order to create these products.

Some projects take longer than others, but the estimated time can be found on the top of the instructions for each project.

Happy Upcycling!

The Purpose of this Guide

It's important to remember that this is just one part of the solution. In order to achieve a plastic-free future we must go to the source of the problem and stop the production of unnecessary single-use plastic items and packaging by opting for sustainable alternatives. It is going to take all of us working together in all sectors including corporate, political, and public to see the change that's needed to stop plastic pollution for good. By downloading this guide, you have proven that you take this problem seriously and are ready to be part of the solution!

This guidebook was compiled by the
World Oceans Day Youth Advisory Council

Sophie Handford (New Zealand)
Aldrin Aujero (Philippines)
Paula Ross (Philippines),
Wenchin Zhang (China)
Portsea Turton (Australia)



Plastic Bottle Flower Mobile

About:

This project is awesome for students looking to decorate their room or common area at university! You can choose colors based on the resources you have and really adapt the sizing depending on the bottles you have collected.

Credit: [Creative Jewish Mom](#)



Materials:

Time: 1 hour

- Recycled plastic beverage bottles
- White glue
- Tissue paper
- Aluminum foil tape
- Large plastic beads leftover from other projects
- Thick yarn, cotton rope or string of your choice
- A branch, dowel, or embroidery hoop (something to use as a base for hanging)

Method

Preparation:

1. Wash the beverage bottle and remove the cap
2. Using slightly diluted white glue, adhere strips of tissue paper to the top portion of the bottle that you've cut into a closed flower shape
3. Cover the necks of the bottles with aluminum duct tape, as well as the tips of some flowers

Making the Bottle Mobile:

1. Tie a knot in the yarn, slip on a large plastic bead (big enough so it doesn't slip through the bottle opening) and then thread the yarn through the neck of the bottle from the bottom up. Simple as that.
2. Decide where you'd like the next flower to be, tie a knot in the yarn, and string on another bead, and then a flower.
3. Hang strands of flowers from a painted white branch or use a dowel or two crossed dowels or an embroidery hoop for a round as opposed to flat mobile.



Button Bracelet

About:

This project is simple and you don't need many materials for it! Following the steps below, you will create a funky and unique bracelet. You can either use random colors, follow a color scheme or create a pattern with the buttons you use. Get creative and see what you can come up with!

Credit: [Claudia Mitchell, Create with Claudia](#)



Method

Preparation:

1. Take your tape measure and fit it around your wrist while deciding what fit you'd like for the bracelet.
2. Add 1" to your desired finished length and then use the scissors to cut one piece of elastic to that size.

Making the Button Bracelet:

1. Join the two ends of the elastic together to form a bracelet shape. An example of how to sew it can be found to the right.
2. Now time to add the buttons! If you'd like to hide the seam, stitch buttons over the top of the seam first. For strength, it's best to sew and knot each button individually. It is up to you what color thread you'd like to use.
3. The finished product could look something like the photo but the cool thing about this project is that there is no specific way it has to be made or look

Materials:

Time: 1 hour

- Buttons
- Strong thread so it doesn't tear
- Elastic (preferably wide)
- Tape measure
- Sewing needles
- Scissors



Eco Bricks

About:

Plastic waste comes in all shapes and forms. Especially when not separated, some plastic materials are often removed from recycling because of their irregular shapes. That's a huge problem because most of that recycling gets thrown away.

Ecobricks solves this problem by turning any plastic material into something useful regardless of the shape, size or form! These bricks can be used to reinforce furniture like benches, cement, or walls for gardens or small projects.

Credit: [Ecobricks](#)

Materials:

Time: 30 minutes

- Any plastic waste
- Plastic bottle
- Scissors
- Stick

Method

Preparation:

1. Wash, clean and dry all plastic materials to prevent mold growth within the bottle.

Making the Bricks:

1. Cut plastic materials into tiny fragments (size doesn't matter as long as it fits into the bottle).
2. Ensure that there are no sharp edges, metals or glass that is included. This is to prevent rupturing the bottle later on.
3. Push the plastic materials into the bottle through the bottle's mouth. Use the stick to compact the bottom layers and add more plastic material when necessary.
4. Ensure that the bottle is full, compact and tight.

*weigh the ecobrick and use a marker indicate it on the bottle. Ensure that all bottles have roughly the same weights (optional)



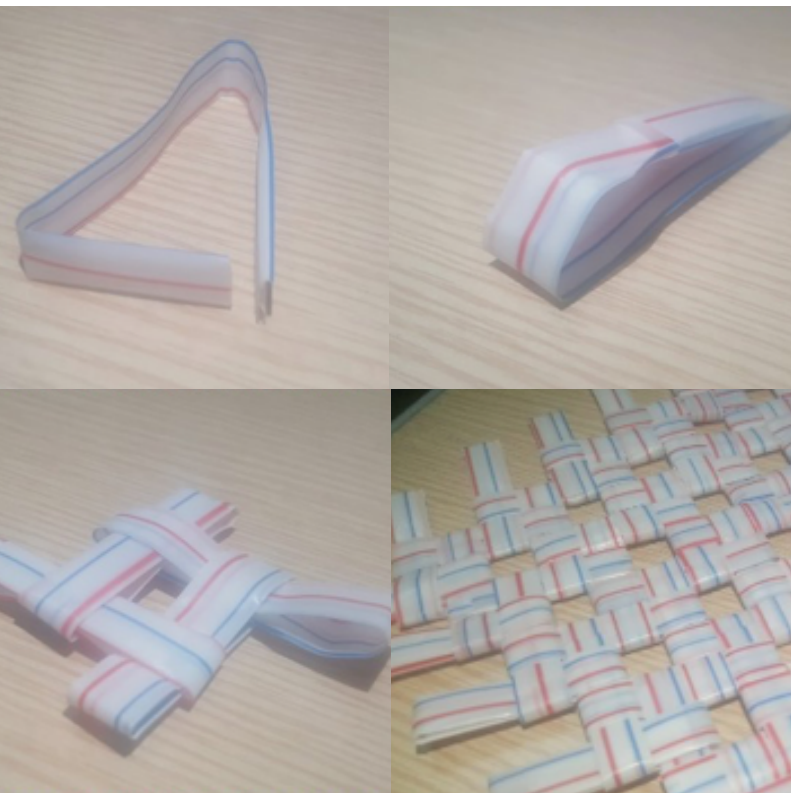
Plastic Straw Mats

About:

Single-use plastic straws are hazardous because they contaminate water bodies and ultimately pose a significant threat to aquatic species when ingested. Nonetheless, it is one of the least common upcycled plastic material due to its lack of a rigid structure and its unsterile connotation.

This upcycling activity explores a new way to upcycle plastic straws and reduce their impacts on the environment. It is very important for this project that you do not go buy plastic straws. Instead, collect them from cleanups or from times when your drink comes with one even though you asked for no straw. Asking friends and family to hold onto any straws they find or accidentally use will help, too. Just remember to wash them thoroughly! It may take some time to accumulate enough straws for this project or you may start off with a small mat and slowly watch it grow.

Credit: Aldrin Aujero (Youth Advisory Council Member)



Materials:

- Used plastic straws
- scissors
- soap

Time: 1 hour

Method

Preparation:

1. Clean the plastic straws by submerging them in soapy water.
2. Rinse and allow the plastic straws to dry for at least 30 minutes.

Making the Mat:

1. Squeeze the plastic straws as flat as you can. Ensure that there is as little air in the straw as possible.
2. Insert one end of the plastic straw into the other to form a loop.
3. Squeeze the loop flat once more to ensure there is as little air as possible.
4. Adjust the loop to form a 2-inch pellet. (for reference, your thumb's middle section to the nail is around an inch)
5. Interlock 4 pellets as shown in the photo. Tighten all gaps.
6. Interlock the chain of pellets and arrange as shown in the photo. Continue arranging to desired size.

Seedling Pots

About:

This upcycling project is good for those of you who bring yogurt in your lunchboxes to school or work. Save them up and grow a mini garden in them! The simple shape and rigid structure of the containers make for a good base for lots of different projects. This is an easy and quick project.

Credit: [Garden and Greenhouse](#)

Materials:

Time: 15 minutes

- Yogurt Pot
- Used teabags
- Seed of your choice
- Paper towel
- Paint (optional)
- Paint brush



Preparation:

1. Clean the yogurt containers by rinsing them in soapywater.
2. Ensure the containers are fully dry and rid of bubbles before making the seedling pot.

Making the Seedling Pots:

1. Feel free to paint the yogurt container and personalize it using the paint and paint brush as much as desired. You can explore different patterns and colors. Get creative! Allow to dry before continuing.
2. Fold the paper towel so that it fits into the yogurt container. Put it into the bottom of the container and wet it so it is damp.
3. Soak the used tea bag and place it on top of the damp, folded paper towel.
4. Make a hole in the top of the teabag and insert the seed of your choice.

When the seeds germinate and the seedlings are about 2 cm tall, plant them in their bags in the garden.

Watering Can

About:

Not only will this help protect the environment through the removal of plastic from the seas and streets, this project will help your plants thrive! This is another super easy project that doesn't require much time.

Credit: [A Childhoods List](#)

Materials:

Time: 15 minutes

- Plastic bottle with lid
- Drill with a small, round drill bit/a metal skewer
- Water

Preparation:

1. Clean the bottle by rinsing it in soapy water.
2. Ensure the bottle is fully dry and rid of bubbles before beginning the making of the watering can.

Making the Watering Can

1. Take the lid off the plastic bottle.
2. Secure the lid on a bench in order to drill / poke around 4-6 holes through it.
3. Fill the bottle with water.
4. Screw the lid back onto the bottle and turn upside down to sprinkle water onto your garden.

