



10 ways to reduce plastics in laboratories

Can your packaging be sent back?

Several suppliers offer this so it can be reused. Engage your suppliers on what options they can offer.



Can you recycle your packaging?

Most packaging doesn't require incineration. Consider if there are ways to avoid excess clinical waste, e.g. targeting a few items which aren't contaminated to no longer go through clinical waste.



Glass vs. Plastics: Could you switch from plastic to reusable glass?

The energy used for washing is far less than that to remake and transport plastic.



Create reagents/kits in-house:

Many common reagents and materials may be produced on site e.g. pour your own gels for DNA electrophoresis



Do you require gloves?

Much research was successfully done without gloves in the past. Choose the appropriate gloves for your task – a thinner version may be just as safe.



- Can you reuse gloves between experiments?
- Thicker gloves are easier to reuse but have more plastic. Consider the balance between thickness and reuse that is best for your work.

Could you buy bulk?

Combine and share with other labs. Only do so when certain to utilise all contents.



Could your leftover plastic containers be used for something else in the lab?



Can you downsize your plastics?

Sometimes there are alternatives which perform the same task with less plastic. E.g. smaller tube sizes.



Purchase 'flexible' kits:

Many labs use kits for standard processes – purchase kits which allow you to buy the contents separately – avoiding waste bottles/reagents.



Tip boxes: Can you reload tip boxes?

Non-contaminated tip boxes can be recycled or some suppliers offer take-back schemes.

