

Western Australia's

Plan for Plastics

Single-use plastics ban Plastic cutlery

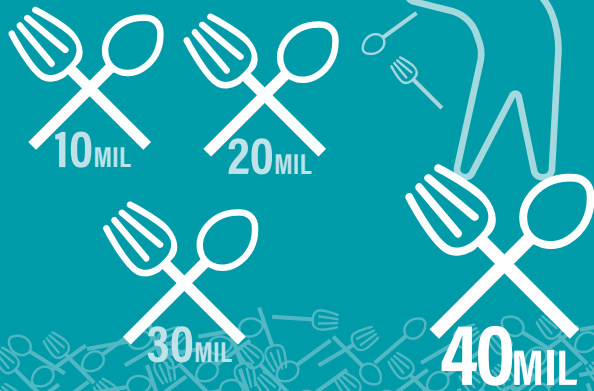
January 2022

From 1 January 2022, regulations to ban the sale, supply and distribution of single-use or disposable plastic cutlery in Western Australia come into effect.

Businesses, organisations and consumers who use these items are being supported to switch to reusable and non-plastic alternatives.

In the 2019–20 financial year, Western Australians used an estimated 40 MILLION pieces of plastic cutlery.

Quick
fact



► What is being banned?

The ban applies to the sale, supply or distribution of single-use or disposable plastic cutlery that is made out of plastic – whether made wholly or partly of plastic, or lined by plastic (e.g. knives, forks, spoons, sporks, splayds, laksa spoons and chopsticks).

Banned cutlery includes those that are made from compostable, biodegradable and degradable plastics.

The ban applies to packs of disposable cutlery sold by retailers, and cutlery provided by hospitality businesses and other organisations.

► Why is plastic cutlery being banned?

About 40 per cent of all plastics used are 'single-use', designed to be used only once or a few times before being thrown away (disposed of). While recyclable, only 11 per cent of single-use plastics are currently recycled, with the majority ending up as litter or in landfills.

In the environment plastic waste breaks down into smaller fragments over a long period of time, if at all. Plastic waste poses a major threat to the health of marine, freshwater and land ecosystems, and impacts the amenity of our environment and coastlines. The consequences and abundance of single-use disposable plastic items is significant, and immediate action is required to reduce these effects.





► What is **not** included in the ban?

Plastic cutlery that is attached as part of a pre-packaged product (e.g. noodles with a spoon contained inside the packaging) or heavier-weight plastic cutlery designed for multiple use and sold as individual items or in sets by retailers (e.g. camping gear and serving utensils).

► Who does the ban apply to?

The ban applies to all businesses, manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers and distributors in Western Australia. Community organisations and institutions may also be affected by the ban.

► Can I still use disposable plastic cutlery I have at home?

Yes, you can. The ban does not apply to the personal use of the items, only the sale, supply and distribution of them.

► What can I use instead?

There are many options to choose from that are both better for the planet, and prevent waste going to landfill. Choose to:

- Refuse – say ‘No’ to plastic cutlery
- Reuse – opt for reusable cutlery made from stainless steel and heavier reusable plastics. Customers may choose to bring their own cutlery too.

If you simply can't refuse and reusable options are not available, then consider disposable cutlery made from non-plastic materials, such as wood and bamboo. Where using disposable options, look for opportunities to reduce waste or to purchase products that are plastic certified as compostable to Australian Standard 4736-2006 or 5810-2010.



► When do penalties apply?

From **1 July 2022** penalties apply for the sale, supply or distribution of plastic cutlery that are banned under the Environmental Protection (Prohibited Plastics and Balloons) Regulations 2018.

Penalties also apply to any person who supplies or manufactures plastic cutlery and knowingly provides false or misleading information about its composition or whether or not it is a banned plastic cutlery.

► Need more information?

Call the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation: 08 6364 7000

Email: plastic-action@dwer.wa.gov.au

Check out the website: [Western Australia's Plan for Plastics | Western Australian Government](https://www.wa.gov.au/government/policies/western-australias-plan-for-plastics) (www.wa.gov.au)

