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Overview of Plastic Food Wraps

Find Eco-Friendly, Reusable Cling Wraps and Food Containers

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Plastic food wraps are one of the marvels of modern society. The convenience of cling wrap can be hard to resist. Unfortunately, the majority of food wraps contain harmful chemicals that can hurt your family and the planet, but rest assured there are some great food storage alternatives and eco-friendly, biodegradable food cling wraps.

Sandwich in plastic cling wrap



Plastic food wraps and their negative effects on the environment and human health

- **PVC:** Some food cling wraps (especially used at the deli counter) are polyvinylchloride (PVC), which is not only very environmentally toxic, it's also laced with phthalates (a chemical used to soften this #3 plastic).[1]
- **BPA and phthalates:** BPA and phthalates have been found in several types of plastic food

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containers and storage bags, increasing the possibility that you absorb them by storing food in plastics.[2]

- **Wildlife hazard:** Film plastics like bags and cling wraps pollute landscapes and oceans where they pose choking, suffocating, intestinal blockage threats to wildlife. They also add to the great [Pacific Ocean plastic island](#) where they wrap around coral, killing these vital organisms.[3]
- **Non-renewable:** Whether it's made from [#3 PVC](#) or [#4 LDPE](#) or low-density polyethylene (another common material used to make plastic wrap products), these plastics are derived from petroleum, making them inherently non-renewable.
- **Non-recyclable:** Although it is technically possible to recycle these plastics, most curbside recycling programs will not accept plastic wraps. Learn more about [recycling soft plastics](#).

Eco-friendly alternatives to conventional food shrink wraps

If you're a greenie looking for more sustainable ways to store your food, here are some great ideas:

- **Cheese:** Store cheeses in airtight containers rather than in plastic wrap
- **Lettuce and spinach:** These delicate greens should be stored in dry, airtight containers in the coolest part of the fridge
- **Collards and kale:** These are hardier greens that can be stored with a damp cloth inside airtight containers in the fridge or even on the counter (up to one week)
- **Ripe fruit:** Things like berries, apples, oranges, mangos, pineapple, and pears are more likely to add to fruit fly issues if kept on the counter so should be stored in the fridge in the produce drawer or airtight containers
- **Leftovers:** [Alternatives to harmful plastic containers](#) exist! Put these in glass, ceramic, or stainless steel containers with tight fitting lids rather than in bowls or on plates with plastic wrap or aluminum foil
- **Lunches:** Pack lunches in reusable containers and wraps like those made by [Kids Konserve](#) and [4myearth](#).

Of course, if you still want to be able to store foods in their original bowls and containers, none of which come with custom lids, there are some plastic wrap alternatives you can try that are much greener than petroleum-based cling wraps and plastic storage bags:

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- **BioBag**: These plastic zip-top bags are 100% biodegradable cling wraps that are certified compostable so you can throw them in the compost pile guilt-free.
- **Ecoflex**: This is another biodegradable and compostable plastic wrap alternative that will break down in a compost pile in a few weeks without leaving any residues.
- **MagicCovers**: For a reusable option, these fantastic silicon lids transform to any sized bowl or container to create a great seal.



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References

- 1 *Plastic Containers Buying Guide*. (n.d.). Retrieved January 30, 2011, from The Green Guide: http://www.thegreenguide.com/buying-guide/plastic-containers/environmental_impact
- 2 *Is It Safe to Heat Food in Plastic?*(n.d.). Retrieved January 31, 2011, from Good Housekeeping: <http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/product-testing/reviews-tests/kitchen-cooking/plastic-safety-heat-food-6>
- 3 *Impact on Oceans and Beaches*. (n.d.). Retrieved January 31, 2011, from Reuseit.com: <http://www.reuseit.com/learn-more/top-facts/impact-on-oceans>

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