

Products and terms to look out for

A bit of a warning here and some products and terms to be wary of. There are a lot of not very good products on the market that use words like 'green' and 'eco' to try and convince you they're good for the planet.



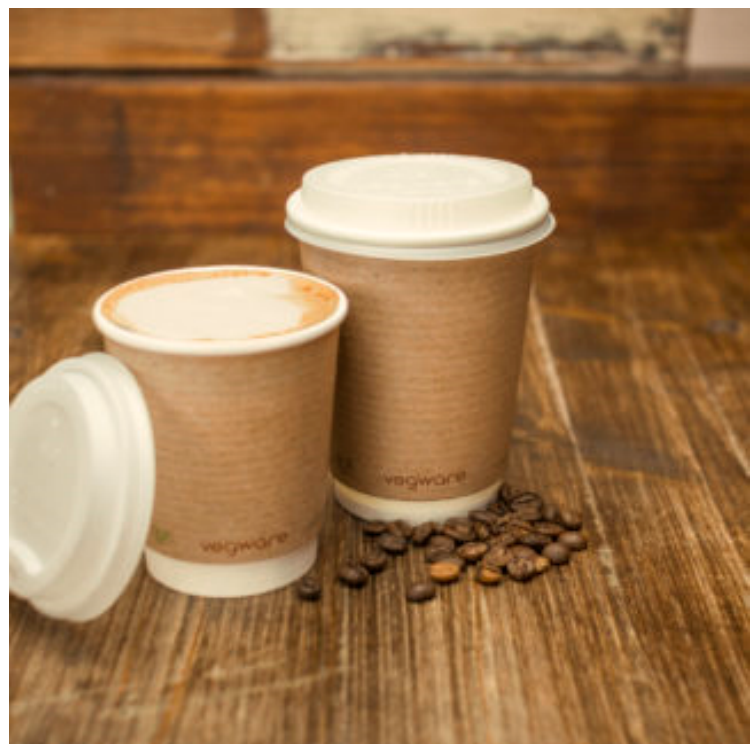
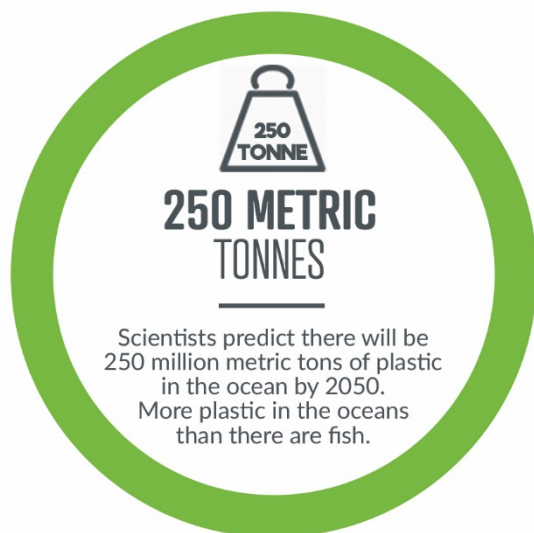
Compostable items

Compostable materials that are certified to BS EN13432 will break down in around 12 weeks in specific industrial facilities.

If compostable items end up as litter, they will still harm the environment as they do not degrade. Very few places in the UK can treat compostable packaging and you should always check with your waste contractor what they can actually recycle or compost.

Residents in Greater Manchester cannot put compostable packaging in their food and garden bins at home as they are not accepted in Local Authority household collections.

It is our advice to think carefully before you switch to compostable items - Ask yourself is the packaging necessary or can you move to a reusable option? There are some cases where compostable packaging may be useful, for example, food caddy liners, fruit and veg stickers and closed loop situations. Further guidance on Compostable Plastic Packaging is available on WRAP's website



Warning on biodegradable

There are a lot of products using the term biodegradable. These may seem like a good option for the environment, but this isn't the case. Biodegradable materials break down by

the action of living organisms like bacteria. This can take a very long time, and results in toxic chemicals being released into the environment. Over a long enough timescale, most materials could be described as biodegradable.

Warning on oxo-degradable

This is a plastic product that has chemicals added to it that mean it breaks down much more quickly. In theory this sounds good, but in practice all that's happening is that these products create microplastic particles far

more quickly, and release chemicals into the environment along the way., This is because plastic only degrades (becomes smaller and smaller pieces) rather than breaks down at the chemical level to its component parts. It is a very misleading product and should be avoided at all costs.