



**MILLION**  
**ACTS OF BLUE**

**A TOOLKIT FOR A  
PLASTIC-FREE FUTURE**

**ACTION**

**#4**

**Get restaurants and cafes to ditch single-use plastics**

# THANK YOU FOR DOWNLOADING **A MILLION ACTS OF BLUE:** **A TOOLKIT FOR A PLASTIC-FREE FUTURE!**

**PLASTIC POLLUTION IS EVERYWHERE,**  
AND WE NEED EVERYONE TO TACKLE IT!

We have all seen the heartbreaking images of beaches covered with plastic waste and animals' stomachs full of it. It's easy to feel overwhelmed and frustrated that in our daily lives we are surrounded by single-use plastic products without alternatives. Our efforts to reduce our own plastic footprint and recycle are admirable and important, but often plastic straws, bags, bottles, and packaging are pushed on us before we have a chance to refuse, or we need products that are only offered packaged in plastic. **We operate in a broken system, it's clogged with plastic, and the people controlling the machine won't turn it off!** The good news is that together we can fix it. And here's how we are going to do it.

Greenpeace, alongside numerous other organizations in the #BreakFreeFromPlastic movement, is campaigning globally to stop the plastic pollution problem at its source – the corporations that have created it and the governments that are failing to regulate it.

**WE BELIEVE IN A WORLD THAT'S FREE OF SINGLE-USE PLASTICS,**  
AND WE ARE UNITING TO BUILD IT.

There is a growing movement of people who are rejecting the old narrative that throwaway plastics are unavoidable and it's up to individuals to make changes in their daily lives to solve the plastic epidemic. Instead, **we are joining together through a Million Acts of Blue, for our beautiful blue planet, to create the real change we need to secure a plastic-free future that is healthier for our families, our communities and the species that call this planet home.** We are holding companies accountable, urging governments to take strong action, and championing a lifestyle that reconnects us to each other and to the beauty of the planet we are working to protect.

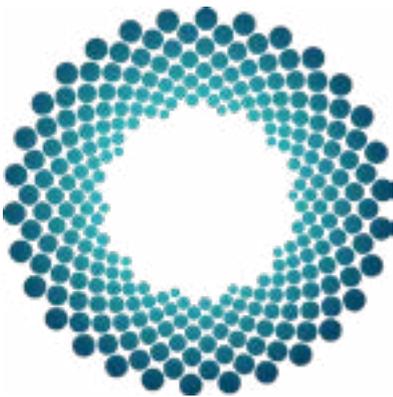
**WHAT IS AN ACT OF BLUE?**

Turning the tide on plastic pollution by taking action to stop single-use plastic from being created in the first place. Inspired by love for our amazing blue planet and the urgent need to protect our oceans, waterways, landscapes and communities.

**We are excited that you have joined us and look forward to supporting you in the change you will be making in your corner of the world.**



## GET RESTAURANTS AND CAFES TO DITCH SINGLE-USE PLASTICS



A growing movement is urging fast-food chains, restaurants and cafes around the world to step up and lead by no longer offering their customers single-use plastic items as an option. Elimination of single-use plastics like straws or cups from popular pubs and cafes equates to avoidance of plastic waste and serves as a point for education and discussion about plastic pollution and the need for local businesses and corporations to take the lead on reduction solutions.

Many of us frequent coffee shops or cafes, and our favourite restaurants on a weekly or even daily basis. From a local popular spot to a big chain, getting a business to take leadership on single-use plastic reduction can create a domino effect of plastic-free action. Don't underestimate the power of getting even one spot to change — you can use it to encourage or pressure other businesses to follow suit and create single-use plastic-free neighbourhoods! **All businesses can, and must, reduce their throwaway plastic footprint, and we can help them see the value in doing so.**

### CASE STUDY

A Greenpeace local group in Winnipeg, Canada, led a [‘Straw Upon Request’ campaign](#) in their city as part of [Plastic Free July](#), and brought many local businesses into the fold. In total, 40+ businesses participated, pledging to stop giving out plastic straws by default to their customers. Not only that, these businesses also agreed to educate their customers by placing promotional information about the campaign on every table. The campaign was widely successful and the group made some big waves in their province. Read their media advisory [here](#) and check out [some fab news coverage](#).



## Some tips for getting started

- 1. Goals and the 'ask'.** Identify the main goal of your campaign, and create a [one-pager](#) that you can give to businesses to explain your campaign and provide background information. Be sure to have a clear ask when you approach them. Do you want them to remove all single-use plastics? Are you able to get them to start with coffee cups or straws? Single-use plastics that they may have on offer include:
  - plastic utensils
  - plastic straws
  - plastic to-go containers
  - plastic-lined coffee cups and lids
  - plastic drink stirrers
  - plastic takeout cups
  - polystyrene/styrofoam
  - plastic bags
  - plastic food packets (e.g. Ketchup)
- 2. Schedule a meeting time.** Call or drop in and ask to make a time to meet with the appropriate person. Business managers are busy people and prefer to be able to schedule meeting times.
- 3. Practice your pitch.** Don't worry if you're worried about your public speaking prowess - people tend to respond to passion and authenticity, rather than perfection. Here are some [talking points to help you craft your pitch](#). Here's a [sample pitch](#).
- 4. Provide background and information!** This is where the [one-pager](#) will come in handy. This gives the person you're meeting with the ability to take the information away and think about it. Not everyone will be convinced on the spot. If they say they're not interested, be sure to thank them for their time and leave them with a smile and your contact info just in case they change their mind.

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5. Avoid false solutions! Avoid suggesting alternatives that might not be any better. Check out the [list of false solutions](#) in the facts section. \*It's important to promote reuse or avoidance, as a way to decrease waste and tackle the problem of throwaway culture.
  6. **Focus on solutions.** In your pitch, briefly outline the problem, but focus on the opportunity to be part of the solution.
  7. **Support and give props to participants.** Offer businesses resources like posters for their windows, flyers to be placed at the counter or '[table toppers](#)' to help them explain the initiative to their customers. Proposing that they have their [sign-on letter](#) displayed is another option for promotion. Be sure to offer ways to celebrate businesses' involvement in the campaign by highlighting them in a blog or web content or through social media. Local restaurants and cafes may be more interested in joining a campaign to reduce SUPs if it's perceived as beneficial to their brand or profile, and if their efforts are publicized to existing and potential customers.
  8. **Find existing 'leaders' and start with 'early adopters'.** Before you launch the official campaign, seek out existing businesses who have already made the changes you are asking others to make. Use them as examples of 'leading businesses' in your pitch. Approaching businesses you think will be 'early adopters' like smaller, local cafes can help build momentum. Similarly, start by approaching venues that you have a pre-existing relationship with, or that you know will be responsive to change such as businesses that already have some sort of environmental or sustainability focus. You can help build your confidence in talking about the campaign and bring others on board.
  9. **Contact community influencers.** Look for other local community engagers and influencers that are important to local businesses such as school green clubs, local politicians or local radio hosts to help promote the campaign!
  10. **Don't get discouraged!** Not every business is going to want to come on board straight away. It's possible they will get on board as your campaign grows and when they see their competitors joining or their customers start asking for no SUPs.
  11. **Make it a media moment.** If you're having success with your campaign, it's worth sharing the news. Here are some tips on how to get [media attention for your campaign](#).



## You got some businesses to stop selling single-use plastic? Amazing!

- **Keep us posted!** Please send us information about the outcome at [actsofblue.ca@greenpeace.org](mailto:actsofblue.ca@greenpeace.org) or fill out our [survey](#).
- **Spread the word on social media!** Share any positive commitments or developments made by businesses and add the hashtags #MillionActsofBlue and #BreakFreeFromPlastic.
- **Tackle another section of the toolkit!** Inspired to do more? Download another section and be in touch with how we can support you in another Act of Blue!

### Other groups taking action on plastic

Check out our allies in the movement at [www.breakfreefromplastic.org](http://www.breakfreefromplastic.org)

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