

● ○ ○ EASY



5 – 10 YRS



1 – 2 HRS



1

Learn about plastics and their recycling codes

2

Try an experiment to separate different plastic waste types

3

Find out how recycling plants recycle mixed plastic waste

INNOVATION IN CHEMISTRY

FANTASTIC PLASTIC RECYCLING



ENCOURAGING TOMORROW'S CHEMISTS TODAY
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INTRODUCTION

Most plastics are made by heating chemicals from crude oil.

Plastic is melted and poured into a mould and cools into a final shape. Plastics are useful because they are strong, cheap to produce, waterproof and light. Plastics however, are also polluting our planet because they take a long time to break down in the environment. To reduce the damage to our planet from plastic waste, we can recycle some plastics to use them again.

Look closely at plastic. Each has a triangle shaped recycling symbol with a number code inside, often with some letters. Each code refers to a different type of plastic. In recycling centres, these codes can help us to separate mixed loads of plastic so that each kind can be recycled correctly.



SAFETY

- **Always** ask an adult for help using scissors.
- Ovens should only be used by an adult.
- Hot materials should be allowed to fully cool before handling.
- This activity should be supervised at all times.



DID YOU KNOW?

The UK produces 100 billion items of plastic waste a year, with the average UK household throwing out 66 plastic items each week.

Reference: www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jul/12/uk-dispose-of-100bn-plastic-packaging-year



