plastics by number





PET (polyethylene terephtalate

In most water and pop bottles, and some packaging. Hard to de-contaminate. Proper cleaning releases harmful chemicals. May leach carcinogens, like DEHA.





HDPE (high-density polyethylene)

In milk, detergent and oil bottles, toys and plastic bags. Considered the safest form of plastic.





PVC (vinyl/polyvinyl chloride)

In food wraps, food oil bottles, teething rings, pet's toys and blister packaging. Produces toxins from manufacture through disposal. Avoid using for microwaving (use glass or microwave-safe crockery instead); wraps made from LDPE (#4s) are safer.





LDPE (low-density polyethylene)

In shrink wraps, garment bags (from dry cleaners), squeezable bottles and plastic bags. Less toxic than other plastics.





PP (polypropylene)

In bottle tops, disposable diapers, carpeting, bags and food wraps, yogurt and margarine containers. Considered the safest plastic.





PS (polystyrene)

In plastic cutlery, foam packaging. May leach into food products.





Other (LEXAN, polycarbonate, BPA aka bisphenol A)

Usually layered or mixed plastics.

For info on BPA check here: http://www.enviroblog.org/2008/04/cheatsheet-bisphenol-a-bpa.htm



More details here:

http://www-tc.pbs.org/strangedays/pdf/StrangeDaysSmartPlasticsGuide.pdf http://www.plasticfreebottles.com/pdf/Understanding-Plastic-Codes.pdf