

The Plastic-Free Swap Checklist

27 research-backed swaps, organized by room — compiled from peer-reviewed exposure studies (every citation at giftedpicks.com/picks/microplastics-research-tracker). No hype: each swap lists the honest reason it matters. giftedpicks.com · 2026 edition

Kitchen

Swap to	Why it matters
Glass containers (bamboo or glass lids)	Reheating leftovers in plastic is the most frequent hot-food-on-plastic moment in most homes.
Wood (maple or walnut)	Every knife stroke shaves particles off the board surface, and they land in the food.
Loose-leaf tea + stainless or ceramic infuser	Brewing-temperature water pulls particles straight out of the bag material — the numbers on this one are startling.
Cast iron, enameled cast iron, or stainless steel	Once the coating is scratched, flakes of it go wherever the food goes.
Wood and stainless steel	Utensils touch food at its hottest point, right in the pan.
Stainless-steel or glass kettle	Boiling water inside plastic is the worst-case leaching scenario.
Filtered tap water in glass or stainless steel	Bottled water consistently tests far higher in particles than filtered tap.
A plate on top, silicone lids, or beeswax wraps	Steam condenses on the wrap and drips back into the dish.
Stainless-steel colander	Pasta water at a full boil pours directly through it.
Pour-over or French press (glass/steel), paper or metal filter	Near-boiling water sits in plastic parts on many drip machines.
Transfer to a plate or glass first — including takeout containers	Microwave heat spikes are exactly the condition that releases the most particles.

Pantry

Swap to	Why it matters
Glass jars (reused sauce jars count)	Long storage means long contact time, and jars are free if you save them.
Oil sold in glass or tins	Oils are fat-soluble solvents — they pull compounds out of plastic better than water does.

Bathroom

Swap to	Why it matters
Bamboo toothbrush	Worn nylon bristles shed, and you replace this item four times a year anyway.
Bar soap	Same cleaning job, zero bottle, usually cheaper per shower.
Shampoo and conditioner bars	One bar replaces two or three bottles of mostly water.
Metal safety razor	A one-time purchase that ends a permanent stream of disposable plastic.
Cotton or hemp liner	Hot steam on soft vinyl every day is a lot of contact with a lot of plastic.
Sugar, salt, or oat-based exfoliants	Those beads are literal microplastic — check labels for “polyethylene.”

Bedroom

Swap to	Why it matters
Cotton or linen bedding	Eight hours a night of friction against synthetic fiber, right at breathing height.
Washable cotton pillow covers (or natural-fill pillows)	A tight-weave natural cover is the cheap fix if new pillows are not in the budget.

Laundry & cleaning

Swap to	Why it matters
Powder in cardboard, or detergent sheets	Jugs are mostly water you pay to ship; powder does the same job.
A microfiber-catching laundry bag or filter	Synthetic fabrics shed fibers into wastewater on every single wash.
Cellulose sponges and wooden dish brushes	Scrubbing abrades the sponge itself — cellulose crumbs compost, plastic crumbs do not.

Baby & kids

Swap to	Why it matters
Glass bottles (silicone sleeve for grip)	Hot formula plus shaking inside a plastic bottle is a high-release combination.
Silicone, wood, or stainless steel	Everything at this age gets chewed, heated, or both.

On the go

Swap to	Why it matters
Insulated stainless-steel bottle	Kills the single most repeated plastic purchase in most weeks.

If you only do 3 things: swap the plastic kettle/coffee-maker contact points (heat = highest shedding), stop microwaving in plastic, and replace plastic cutting boards. Full guide + exposure calculator: [giftedpicks.com/plastic-free-checklist](https://www.giftedpicks.com/plastic-free-checklist)