



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao

Single-use plastic shopping bag ban

Alternatives to single-use plastic shopping bags by retailer type

How to use this information:

1. Find your retailer type in the alphabetical list below, eg grocery store.
2. Find out what type of bags/packaging your customers want.
3. Read our suggested alternatives to single-use plastic bags.
4. Find out what else you can do.

Contents

Butcher Shop

Café or restaurant

Clothing store

Dairy and convenience store

Gift shop

Grocery store

Local market

Other retail eg, hardware and homeware

Take-away shop

Butcher shop

What do customers need?

Bags that are:

- easy to carry
- contain leaks
- able to handle damp items
- easy to clean.

Suggested options*

Best option

Allow customers to bring in their own containers from home – you could even provide a small discount.

OR a variety of bag options are available including:

- PET bags
- insulated cooler bags (suitable for prolonged reuse).

Note: Bag options with recycled content (ideally 100%) can further reduce the impact on the environment and help create more demand for recycled products.

What else could I do?

- Encourage customers to bring reusable bags by offering an incentive such as a small discount, free item or stamp on a loyalty card.
- Provide boxes for reuse for customers who forget to bring in a bag or for large orders.
- Hygiene will be an important consideration, so opt for bags that are easy to wash.

Café or restaurant

What do customers need?

They want containers/packaging that is:

- easy to carry
- contains spills
- affordable.

Suggested options*

Best option

Do not offer a bag. Customers can bring their own bags or take food away without a bag. With the phase out of single-use plastic bags, it is likely your customers will have reusable bags in their car. For customers travelling on foot or bike, they have until 1 July to get used to bringing their own bag.

What else could I do?

- Provide boxes for reuse for customers with large orders. You may already have a surplus of boxes from bulk buys.
- Consider if the packaging you have for customers who want to take food away or take leftovers home is easy to carry and capable of containing liquids.
- Allow customers to bring in their own containers from home – you could even give them a small discount.

Clothing store

What do customers need?

Bags/packaging that:

- are easy to carry
- can fit multiple and bulky items
- available in different sizes.

Suggested options*

Best option



A variety of options are available. Suggested options include:

- lightweight, synthetic fabric bags
- woven and non-woven polypropylene
- PET bags
- cotton or canvas bags.

Note: Bag options with recycled content (ideally 100%) can further reduce the impact on the environment and help create more demand for recycled products.

What else could I do?

- Do not offer a bag. Customers can bring their own bags or carry items away without a bag.
- Promote the use of reusable bags by offering an incentive such as a small discount or points/stamps on a loyalty card.
- Sign up for community bag share schemes like boomerang bags.
- If possible, choose bags with a percentage of recycled content.

Dairy and convenience store

What do customers need?

Bags that:

- hold a few items
- are easy to carry
- are durable
- are affordable.

Suggested options*

Best option

Do not offer a bag. Customers can bring their own bags or carry items away without a bag. With the phase out of single-use plastic bags, it is likely your customers will have reusable bags in their car. For customers travelling on foot or bike, they have until 1 July to get used to bringing their own bag.

Other options



A variety of options are available. If possible, choose bags with a high percentage of recycled content. Suggested options include:

- lightweight, synthetic fabric bags
- woven and non-woven polypropylene
- PET bags
- cotton or canvas bags.

Note: Bag options with recycled content (ideally 100%) can further reduce the impact on the environment and help create more demand for recycled products.

What else could I do?

- Provide boxes for reuse for customers who forget to bring bags
- Sign up for community bag share schemes like Boomerang bags.

Gift shop

What do customers need?

Bags/packaging that:

- is easy to carry
- can fit bulky items
- available in different sizes.

Suggested options*

Best option

Do not offer a bag. Customers can bring their own bags or carry items away without a bag. With the phase out of single-use plastic bags, it is likely your customers will have reusable bags in their car. For customers travelling on foot or bike, they have until 1 July to get used to bringing their own bag.



What else could I do?

- Promote the use of reusable bags by offering an incentive such as a small discount, or points/stamps on a loyalty card.
- Sign up for community bag share schemes like boomerang bags.
- Offer boxes or gift wrapping instead.

Grocery store

What do customers need?

A variety of packaging options exist that would meet customer needs.

They want packaging that:

- holds multiple items
- is easy to carry
- is durable
- is easy to clean

- keeps items cool.

Suggested options*

Best option

Encourage customers to bring their own bags and/or to reuse bags instead of buying a new bag each time.

Other options

A variety of options are available. You may want to offer a selection of different bags for customers to buy or choose to stock one type of bag only.

Suggested options include:

- lightweight, synthetic fabric bags
- woven and non-woven polypropylene
- PET bags
- cotton or canvas bags
- jute
- insulated cooler bags (suitable for prolonged reuse).

Note: Bags with recycled content (ideally 100%) can further reduce the impact on the environment and help create more demand for recycled products.

What else could I do?

- Encourage customers to bring reusable bags by offering an incentive such as a small discount.
- Provide boxes for reuse for customers who forget to bring bags.
- Sign up for community bag share schemes like Boomerang bags.
- Free item or stamp on a loyalty card.
- Provide boxes for reuse for customers who forget to bring in a bag or for large orders.
- Hygiene will be an important consideration, so opt for bags that are easy to wash.

Local market

What do customers need?

Bags that are:

- easy to carry
- can handle damp items
- easy to clean

- durable
- hold multiple items.

Suggested options*

Best option



Ask customers to bring their own bag. With the phase out of single-use plastic bags, it is likely your customers will have reusable bags in their car. For customers travelling on foot or bike, they have until 1 July to get used to bringing their own bag.

What else could I do?

You could offer reusable bags for sale or sign up to a community bag share schemes like boomerang bags.

Other retail stores eg, hardware, homeware

What do customers need?

Bags that are:

- easy to carry
- can fit bulky items
- available in different sizes.

Suggested options*

Best option

Do not offer a bag. Customers can bring their own bags or can carry items away without a bag. With the phase out of single-use plastic bags, it is likely your customers will have reusable bags in their car. For customers travelling on foot or bike, they have until 1 July to get used to bringing their own bag.

A variety of options are available. You may wish to offer a selection of different bags for customers to buy or choose to stock one type of bag only. If possible, choose bags with a high percentage of recycled content. Suggested options include:

- lightweight, synthetic fabric bags
- woven and non-woven polypropylene
- PET bags
- cotton or canvas bags
- jute
- insulated cooler bags (suitable for prolonged reuse).

Note: Bag options with recycled content (ideally 100%) can further reduce the impact on the environment and help create more demand for recycled products.

What else could I do?

- Promote the use of reusable bags by offering an incentive such as a small discount, or points or stamps on a loyalty card.
- Sign up for community bag share schemes like boomerang bags.
- Provide boxes for reuse.

Take-away shop

What do customers need?

They want containers or bags that are:

- easy to carry
- contain spills
- affordable.

Suggested options*

Best option



Ask customers to bring their own bag. With the phase out of single-use plastic bags, it is likely your customers will have reusable bags in their car. For customers travelling on foot or bike, they have until 1 July to get used to bringing their own bag.

What else could I do?

Re-think your packaging. Consider if different packaging would be better for preventing spills from liquids. Prevent leakage by not overfilling food containers.

Note: If you are re-thinking your packaging, it would also be a great time to assess how recyclable your packaging is. For example, most councils will not accept polystyrene in kerbside recycling. Check the website of your local council for more information about what is recyclable and compostable in your area.

- Encourage customers to bring reusable bags by offering them an incentive ie, a small discount, free item or stamp on a loyalty card. Many cafes already do this when customers bring in a reusable coffee cup.

- Provide reusable boxes for customers who forget to bring in a bag or for large orders. You may already have a surplus of cardboard boxes from bulk buys.
- Offer reusable bags for sale.

**Paper bags or heavier LDPE bags (above 70 micron) are not included in the ban. These have not been included above as they are less likely to be a reusable alternative to single-use plastic shopping bags.*

Published in May 2019 by the
Ministry for the Environment
Publication number: INFO 881



*Making Aotearoa New Zealand
the most liveable place in the world*
Aotearoa - he whenua mana kura mō te tangata

New Zealand Government