

Plastic identity

Plastic is a synthetic material made from polymers, which are long, repeating chains of molecules. Most plastic items are labelled with a resin code that identifies the plastic the product is made of. Here is a breakdown on what these seven codes are.

<p>RESIN IDENTIFICATION CODE</p> 	 <p>01 PETE Polyethylene Terephthalate</p>	 <p>02 HDPE High-Density Polyethylene</p>	 <p>03 PVC Polyvinyl Chloride</p>	 <p>04 LDPE Low-density Polyethylene</p>	 <p>05 PP Polypropylene</p>	 <p>06 PS Polystyrene (Styrofoam)</p>	 <p>07 OTHER Miscellaneous plastics (e.g. acrylic, nylon)</p>
<p>COMMON ITEMS MADE FROM MATERIAL</p>	<p>Most soft drink, juice and water bottles, thin fruit boxes</p>	<p>Milk bottles, detergent bottles, buckets</p>	<p>Cling wrap, credit cards, raincoats, children's modelling clay</p>	<p>Plastic bags, garbage bags, sandwich bags, plastic bottle caps</p>	<p>Take-out containers, yogurt containers and other single-serving tubs</p>	<p>Disposable cups and plates, packing foam</p>	<p>Baby bottles, ketchup bottles, nylon clothing</p>
<p>IS IT SAFE TO REUSE AS FOOD STORAGE?</p>	<p></p> <p>It is not advisable to reuse the same single-use bottles over a prolonged period. Repeated use increases the risk of bacterial growth and migration of chemicals from the bottle to the liquid.</p>	<p></p> <p>Items with this code typically do not contain plasticisers that could leach into food. But used milk jugs are not well suited as food storage containers as they are difficult to sanitise properly, and the plastic will degrade over time. Detergent and bleach containers should also not be reused for storing consumables.</p>	<p></p> <p>No. Items with this code are more prone to chemical leaching and not recommended for reuse.</p>	<p></p> <p>Yes. Items with this code have a low risk of chemical leaching. But there is still a risk of bacterial contamination, especially since disposable plastics are not designed for easy cleaning.</p>	<p></p> <p>Similar to LDPE, polypropylene has a low risk of chemical leaching. However, these boxes still risk bacterial contamination after prolonged usage.</p>	<p></p> <p>No. Items with this code contain styrene – a possible human carcinogen – which can leach into your food.</p>	<p></p> <p>It depends. There are a number of plastic types under this code. However, one of these is polycarbonate, which is known to contain BPA, a chemical that interferes with the endocrine system. Products with this chemical should not be reused for food storage.</p>
<p>Recycling in Singapore</p> <p>Residents here do not need to sort their plastic recyclables by plastic type as Singapore practices a commingled recycling collection system, where all items go into a single bin. However, items from plastic code #6 such as styrofoam should not be thrown in the recycling bins here.</p>							