

# 10 Ways You Can Recycle Plastic Food Bottles

Have you ever noticed that you seem to buy, and then throw out endless numbers of plastic food and beverage bottles?

From ketchup and mayonnaise to soda and water, plastic bottles are truly one of the most common sources of rubbish. Did you know the plastic bottle are also some of the most versatile things you can have for managing all kinds of prepping needs?

Have a look at just a few simple things you can do with plastic bottles to make your life easier now and navigate through a major crisis. You'll start stockpiling plastic bottles when you'll see these projects, so that you have a large reserve of them in time of need.

## Tools to Have On Hand

Even though plastic bottles are exceptionally easy to work with, a few basic tools are very important to have onhand.

- Scissors
- Pointed objects such as knitting needles, awls, nails, etc
- Knife
- Paper punch
- Stapler
- Ruler, Paper, Compass, Protractor – for designing items that you will be making from the bottles. A paper pattern is especially useful because you can always use it to make new items as old ones wear out.
- Candle – for some projects, you will need to melt the plastic in order to create a perfect fit or to make a new form altogether. When used with care, a candle can provide enough heat to soften or melt the plastic.
- Non-flammable work surface – molten, and even very soft

plastic can stick to all kinds of surfaces and be difficult to remove. Aluminum foil or other non-flammable materials can help you reduce the risk of starting an unwanted fire and also make clean up much easier. Don't forget that plastic can also generate sparks that can easily land on curtains or other flammable material. Work in an area where you do not have to worry about sparks starting fires hours or even days after you completed your task.

- Source of readily available water or fire extinguisher – if you are planning to heat plastic for any reason, keep water or a fire extinguisher on hand in case the fire gets out of control.

And here are the DIY projects to develop using plastic bottles:

### 1. Sieve/Strainer

Removing debris from water, cooking, and even watering houseplants all require some kind of sieve or strainer. Despite that, when your life turns upside down because of a short term or long term disaster, sieves and strainers may be the last things on your mind. Fortunately, you can make a good strainer by poking a few holes in a plastic bottle.

To make strainers with the most precise patterns and holes, start off by adding water to the bottle and letting it freeze. Do not put the cap back on the bottle or overfill it as this can cause the bottle to split from the expansion that occurs as water converts to ice.

Once you have a solidly frozen bottle to work with, use clamps or a vice to secure the bottle to your work table. Now all you have to do is punch holes in the bottle with a nail or awl and then let the ice melt. After you empty the water out, you will have a perfectly good strainer for food, water, and anything else that will not interact with the plastic.

## 2. Water Purification and Filtration

There are at least three ways you can use plastic drinking bottles for water purification:

- First, if you have a clear bottle, simply fill it with water and set it in the sun for a few hours. The UV rays from the sun will go right through the plastic and kill off any bacteria in the water. Just make sure that you do not let the water get too hot because this will cause the water to take on a plastic taste. In addition, if the water gets hot enough to make steam, it can cause the bottle to burst.
- Second – you can cut the bottle open and use it to layer various kinds of filtration medium. Charcoal, sand, and just about anything else can be layered in the bottle. Be sure to have a clean cup or some container ready and in position to catch the water after it drains through the filtration media.
- Third – if you plan on using hydroponics for growing food and raising fish, it is very important to keep the water well filtered. You can make an [aquarium filter](#) of just about any size using old plastic drinking bottles. Even if you use simple media like charcoal and fiber floss, your aquaponics system will work better than if you have no form of filtration and aeration.

*Video first seen on [desertsun02](#).*

## 3. Bug Catcher

Have you ever noticed that mosquitoes, horse flies and other noxious flying insects seem to show up when you have the least amount of time or energy to deal with them? If so, then you probably already know that these insects will probably appear in droves during a crisis situation.

To make matters even worse, the Zika virus and many other

dangerous diseases can be transmitted by these insects. In times when sanitation and waste removal systems will be either overtaxed or unavailable, it is more important than ever to know how to get rid of flying insects using non-chemical means.

You can use plastic bottles to make inexpensive, easy to maintain [bug catchers](#) that will work no matter where you put them. In fact, if you have a problem with insects right now, you can use these bug catchers to solve your problems. Click on the picture below to read our article on how to build this bug catcher!



#### 4. Build Shelters

Surprisingly enough, there are dozens, if not more ways to use plastic bottles to build shelters. You can fill them with sand or other materials that would normally be of little use, and then make a mud cement to form walls.

Some people also fill the bottles with water or other materials that make it easier to use passive heating or cooling methods. You can also use plastic bottles filled with water and bleach to create a basic light that will brighten up an interior room.

Plastic bottles can also be cut apart for roof materials and siding, or you can melt the plastic down and form it into more suitable tiles.

*Video first seen on [Florence Naluyimba](#).*

## 5. Leak Sealant

If you think insects are going to be a nuisance in the post crisis world, then you may be caught off guard by how many problems can be caused by leaks. When it comes to overlooked areas of prepping, you may not even be thinking about storing away [extra PVC pipe](#) or other items that may spring a leak at just the wrong moment.

As long as the pipes in question will not reach high temperatures, then you can fix these leaks easily enough with plastic bottles. All you need to do is:

- Cut a large enough patch from the plastic bottle to cover the area that is leaking.
- Use a candle to presoften the patch as much as possible.
- Wear heat protecting while you fit the plastic patch to the area that is leaking.
- Carefully use the candle to heat the plastic patch until it fully adheres to the item that needs to be patched. Be careful not to melt or burn the item that is being patched.
- If you have any kind of crazy glue or other sealant that will bond the plastic to the leaking object, you can use that instead of heating up the plastic.

## 6. Container Garden Planters

As with building a shelter, there are endless ways to use plastic bottles for growing plants. Here are just a few that every prepper should know about:

- [Vertical garden planters](#) – use bottles in combination with walls and ladders to create gardens in just about any area.
- Vertical garden wall planters – if you are already building a shelter out of plastic bottles, then you might just want to incorporate these solutions for creating a garden and also disguising your home. Who would think that a house lurks beneath a mess of wild grape vines, raspberry stickers, or even poison ivy? Even better, you can combine these vertical plant walls with an internal layer of sand bags to make your carefully hidden home bullet proof.
- Vertical Garden Towers – one of the best ways to grow herbs, onions, and garlic revolves around having many plants arranged in layers. This is easy to achieve when you make some large holes in a soda bottle to that the plants can grow from holes at different levels in the container. If you have very limited space for growing indoors, a vertical garden tower may be the best way to go.
- Self – Watering Planters – for carefree gardens indoors and outdoors.
- Plastic Bottle Greenhouse – If you are more interested in conventional growing methods and need a greenhouse, you can use this design. For improved temperature control, seal some of the bottle pairs with heat from a candle so that the bottles will hold water. Since water absorbs more heat than air, and lets it go more slowly, you can extend the growing season quite a bit using this design.

## 7. Drawer and Counter Organizers

Since plastic bottles come in all shapes and sizes, it is very easy to cut them down and use them as drawer and counter organizers. If you want something a bit fancier, you can also make vertical storage trays for lightweight items.

For example, the tray system featured in the link below is perfect for storing paper clips, thumb tacks, and a number of other desktop items. This includes sticky notes and other reminders that need to be in a prominent place without taking covering up other important things.

If you need to store heavier items in each tray, it may help to use heavier washers at the bottom of each bottle. For improved durability, it may also help to use cement in the base to reduce the risk of the stand tipping over.

Or, better yet, you can turn the base into something of a coin bank and let the weight of the coins act as an anchor for the stand.

*Video first seen on [MORENA DIY](#).*

## 8. Life Jacket

Life jackets and other important swimming gear are the kinds of “leisure” items that you may also forget during a crisis. Since plastic bottles float well, they also make excellent life vests. Just make sure that you leave the caps on and do not poke holes in them.

There are many ways to join the bottles together to make a suitable vest. In general, the more bottles you can join together, the more weight they will be able to float. If you do not have rope available, you can use vines or anything else that will not fall apart in the water.

*Video first seen on [Joshua Guinto](#).*

## 9. Boats and Rafts

Unless you have a large homestead with a private pond large enough for boating, chances are you do not have access to a boat that can be launched easily.

No matter whether you pay for docking at a local marina, or you must transport the boat on a trailer, it will be very difficult to manage all of this during a major disaster. Nevertheless, if you must travel across water, you won't get very far without a boat or raft. You can build a boat or raft with plastic bottles and glue.

There are also many other materials you can incorporate into the frame in order to take advantage of the best of the materials you have on hand.

When making a boat or raft, you should be very careful about the kind of glue that you use. While many waterproof glues and epoxies will work fine in freshwater, they may not work well at all in marine or brackish water. It will also be to your advantage to use a rope or net system as part of the boat's form so that the bottles have a better chance of staying together even if the glue fails.

*Video first seen on [Gabriel Dubois](#).*

*Video first seen on [Ezequiel Oliveira](#).*

This fascinating version can even be driven with a motor and oars!

*Video first seen on [eroneus1](#).*

## 10. Air Blowers and Vacuum Cleaners



In a world where electricity will be at a premium, you may still need air blowers or suction to accomplish some basic tasks. While you can still sweep the floor and get rid of cobwebs with a broom, there may still be times when a vacuum cleaner or air blower will be of immense benefit.

Here are some simple guides for making vacuum cleaners. The amount of suction produced will depend largely on the strength of the motor.

*Video first seen on [Yuri Ostr](#).*

*Video first seen on [GOODTECH – Creativity and Science](#).*

Or build a 90 psi air tank:

*Video first seen on [johnnyq90](#).*

And here's an air blower

*Video first seen on [Navin Khambhala # crazyNK](#).*

Before you throw out an empty beverage or food plastic bottle, take a look at your survival goals and the kinds of things you would like to have on hand. From boats and vacuum cleaners to organizing tools, you can do far more than expected with plastic bottles.

Never underestimate the power of these simple "rubbish" items in situations where your life, and the lives of your loved ones depend on successfully innovating with whatever items you may have on hand. Give some of these ideas a try and you are sure to find plenty of cost efficient, effective ways to pursue prepping goals and perhaps even make your life in the pre-crisis world a bit easier.



In a SHTF situation that's  
all you have.

**3 SECONDS**

Will you  
**SURVIVE?**

TAKE TEST

*This article has been written by **Carmela Tyrell** for  
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