



Your bathroom is responsible for 2/3rds of your single-use plastic waste

An [*illustrated study by Bower Collective*](#) quantifies the UK's shocking single-use plastic waste, room by room

- A 2-person household goes through 1438 single use plastic-products per year (or 120 per month)
- UK households use 1.54 million kgs of non-food related single use plastic every year (the same weight as 1,160 Mini Coopers!)
- Terrible trio: toilet cleaner, hand-wash and sanitary pads alone produce 23% of the home's plastic waste
- 1 person produces 24.25kg of single-use plastic waste per year (that's almost a third of the average Briton's bodyweight)

Despite the plastic-waste emergency, the world produces 381 million tonnes in plastic waste yearly – a figure set to double by 2034. Even if Brits are vigilant at rinsing and recycling their plastic waste, less than 10% of UK single-use plastic that makes it to the recycling bin is genuinely recycled.

Bower Collective, an [award-winning](#) sustainable online subscription platform, have released a comprehensive breakdown of single-use plastic hotspots in the UK home, room by room, shelf by shelf, to help the UK consumer take manageable steps to reduce their impact one product at a time.

The top offenders in the home

Just 10 products in the home account for half of the home's single-use plastic waste -- and all of these items can be found in the bathroom.

Rank	Product	Annual avg. waste (kg) <i>based on 2 person household</i>	% out of the whole house
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1.	Toilet Cleaner	5.1 kg.	10.5
2.	Hand wash	3.2 kg.	6.8
3.	Sanitary Pads	2.7 kg.	5.5
4.	Hair Mask	2.4 kg.	5
5.	Hair Gel/Wax	2.4 kg.	5
6.	Deodorant	2.3 kg.	4.8
7.	Tampons	1.9 kg.	6.1
8.	Body Wash/Shower Gel	1.8 kg.	3.8
9.	Conditioner	1.6 kg	3.2
10.	Toothpaste	1.5 kg	3

Most frequently bought products in a 2 person household

Some single-use products are bought, and thrown out, weekly. Parents will not be surprised that the most frequently purchased single-use product is baby & wet wipes. On average, this item is bought 52 times per year, on par with hand cream -- a modern necessity now we are sanitising and washing our hands more regularly.

Bathroom

The bathroom is responsible for 2/3rd of the households single-use plastic waste, more than any other room. In one year, this amounts to around 1 million kg of bathroom waste across all UK households.

Personal and feminine hygiene is the most polluting shelf in the bathroom, accounting for 31% of all bathroom waste. The other hotspots are hair care and grooming (which is responsible for 20%), the bath and shower tray (19%) and toilet maintenance (which for just the bathroom toilet alone is 13%).

The worst product in this room is toilet cleaner, which is responsible for 11% of one bathroom's single-use plastic waste contribution. Sanitary pads amount to 9% of the bathroom's contribution (or 2.7kg per household per year), and hair gel and hair wax are the next biggest offenders, with each one accounting for 8% of the bathroom's contribution.

Utility Room

The utility room beats the kitchen to the title of second most polluting area. Overall, cleaning and laundry products found here contribute to 8.1% of the entire household's contribution.

The laundry shelf contributed to 33% of the room's plastic-waste, leaving cleaning products responsible for 67% of the room's waste.

The worst product in this room is fabric conditioner, which is responsible for 20% of the room's single-use plastic waste contribution. Glass and mirror cleaner and surface sanitiser are the next biggest offenders, with each one accounting for 14% each.

Kitchen

Without taking food-packaging into account, the kitchen accounts for 7.7% of a home's single-use plastic waste, or 124,141 kg. Of annual waste across all UK households.

Kitchen cleaning spray alone accounts for 22.5% of the kitchen's output. More thorough hand washing also means more plastic waste, as 20% of all kitchen waste is from hand wash bottles, which equates annually to 25,524kg of UK wide waste. The third most polluting bottle was hand lotion, which accounted for 16% of the room's plastic output.

Bedroom

The bedroom only accounts for a modest 5% of the home's plastic waste contribution. Make-up independently accounts for 79% of the bedroom's contribution, leaving 'handbag items' (hand gel and travel sized hand cream, to make up the rest).

In a two-person household, you can expect to rack up around 1.9 kg. of makeup waste per year. The cosmetic having the most ugly impact is lipstick: which accounts for 23% of bedroom single-use plastic waste, and 29% of the makeup-bags. The next biggest offender is Make-up setting spray, which when used regularly, accounts for just shy of 12% of the Bedroom's plastic waste contribution.

We know that the impact of single-use plastics is devastating: from the effect of plastic on marine life, to toxic landfill, carbon-polluting incineration and fatbergs. Sometimes these issues can seem so overwhelming, that it's hard to know where to start. By taking one big part of our everyday lives (our home) and tackling the issue room by room, shelf by shelf, we hope our 'Sustainable House Tour' empowers you to see how you can make a difference - on a more tangible scale.

Ends

Notes to Editor

- *Please credit the study within your article to the following source:*
<https://bowercollective.com/pages/sustainable-house-tour>
- *Feel free to use infographics attached to the original email, we can send you more upon request.*
- *Please contact me with any questions or data requests at*
alice@typeamedia.co.uk

Methodology

- *This was compiled by using Bower's in-house data, data from the Waste Calculator (whose sources are listed [here](#))*
- *The most popular household products (and details of their weight) were chosen from Sainsburys.co.uk (As of July 2021)*

About Bower Collective

Sustainable online subscription platform, Bower Collective provides consumers with Earth's best home and personal care products in reusable and refillable packaging.

Launched in January 2020, Bower Collective is rapidly becoming the world's leading, digital first, sustainable consumer goods company, with a community of over 60,000 customers and counting.

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