

BEAUTY

Plastic purge

Katie Wright looks at the companies taking steps to improve their environmental footprint - so you can shop guilt-free

LAST year, a law came into force banning microbeads - the tiny plastic particles used in products like facial scrubs - because they were being ingested by marine life, and the beauty industry patted itself on the back for a job well done.

Of course, eliminating microbeads was a step in the right direction, but take a look at the average bathroom shelf and you'll discover there's still a long way to go, as manufacturers are so heavily dependent on plastic packaging to house all those lotions and lipsticks.

The UK uses 13 billion plastic bottles each year, according to the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee report. Clearly, we need to be reducing the amount of single-use plastic we use and send to landfill, while also increasing the amount we recycle - and fast.

While it may sometimes seem that the beauty industry is doing more harm than good in the battle against plastic pollution, there are a number of companies taking steps to improve their packaging and environmental impact.

Lush, which has a long history in environmental and animal activism, has just opened its first 'Naked' shop in the UK, with the Manchester store selling only plastic packaging-free products, such as shampoo bars and solid cleansers.

French brand L'Occitane has announced a commitment to use 100 per cent recycled plastic for its packaging by 2025, while Urban Veda has partnered with Plastic Oceans Foundation UK, pledging 10 per cent of all online sales to support the charity in its fight against plastic pollution.

For some firms, change will take time, but plenty of others are already making strides towards a plastic-free future, from small independent names to cosmetics giants.

Want to do your bit? Here are 11 brands that can help make your beauty routine more green...

1. Lush

In addition to the new shop, Lush's plastic packaging-free products are also available online and the brand recently made its Naked skincare range permanent, due to its popularity with fans. If you're looking for a sustainable alternative to face wipes, try the reusable and biodegradable 7 To 3 cleansing wipes.

» Lush Amazon Primer naked facial oil, £9.95 (pictured)
» Lush 7 To 3 cleansing wipes, £2 each

2. Natural World

"Did you know that plastic bottles take 450 years or more to decompose?" says Michael Eggerton, director at Brodie and Stone, where bottles are made from 100 per cent recycled plastic with bio based labels made from sugar cane.

Michael admits that making the move to a recycled material wasn't easy. Because the new plastic comes from a mix of sources, it has a grey tint, rather than being completely clear.

"We also faced the challenge of shininess, as the final bottles come matte, so we need to educate the consumers who think the product has gone off, as the packaging is not a bright as usual."

» Natural World argan oil shampoo, £3 (was £4), Tesco

3. Love Beauty And Planet

In response to consumer demand, Unilever has launched new vegan brand Love Beauty And Planet. Every bottle in the hair, body and skincare range is made from recycled plastic and is recyclable. Currently, the bottle tops aren't recycled, but the company is committed to finding a sustainable solution for the caps too.

» Love Beauty And Planet blooming colour shampoo, £7.49, Superdrug

4. Dr Bronner

Bar soaps are best in terms of preventing waste and Dr Bronner has a range of those, but even its liquid soaps are eco-friendly, coming packaged in a 100 per cent post-consumer recycled plastic bottles.

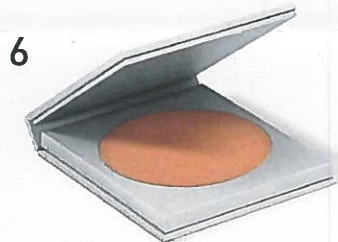
Mike Bronner, president at Dr Bronner, says: "By turning used plastic bottles in to new plastic bottles and products, we help conserve virgin resources, reduce landfill, and capitalise on the energy already invested in making existing plastic products."

» Dr Bronner baby unscented pure-castile liquid soap, £7.69

5. Bramley

Natural beauty brand Bramley made the switch from traditional plastic bottles to more sustainable biopolymer HDPE, which is derived from sugar cane, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

"We are really excited to be one of the first bath and body companies to change the material of our bottles to biopolymer HDPE," says founder Chloe Luxton. "Alongside the launch of our one litre bottles online and the switch to fully



recyclable pumps, we are proud Bramley is working towards a greener future."
» Bramley body lotion, £4

6. Miild

Lots of make-up companies are lagging behind in terms of packaging improvements, but there are some notable exceptions, such as Danish brand Miild, which makes allergy and eco certified cosmetics.

"We take our environmental impact very seriously - any products that can come in cardboard, do," says co-founder Tanja Gregersen.

"So that's all of our mineral powders, bronzers, blushers, concealers and eyebrow/eyeshadow kits. It's 12 of our 13-product range currently - the mascara comes in a tube with no outer packaging."

Co-founder Tine Emilie Svendsen adds: "Today, when we meet our customers, we know we've made a difference to every person who wants to wear make-up with a clear conscience, for their body and the environment."

» Miild mineral blush in cherise splendid, £30, Klarify

7. Cosmydor

Parisian eco luxe brand Cosmydor makes 'virtuous cosmetics' and has a no plastic policy. Packaging is made from glass, aluminium and cardboard, with a priority given to local producers in order to reduce carbon emissions from transport.

» Cosmydor E/2 Essential Care Tonka face cream, £35

8. Clockface

Yorkshire-based Clockface makes organic vegan products for women and men. All its packaging is recyclable, made from either amber glass or fully recyclable plastic, and wherever possible, is made from recycled material.

» Clockface Enhanced Recovery body oil, Clary Sage & Geranium, £25

9. Natural Deo Co

Looking for an eco-friendly deodorant? The Natural Deo Co creates natural, cruelty free, vegan approved balms that are packaged in plastic-free jars.

» Natural Deo Co clean deodorant balm orange and bergamot, £11, All Beauty

10. Little Beau Sheep

Easily the most adorable plastic-free product on the market, Little Beau Sheep lanolin soaps come wrapped in 100 per cent wool and adorned with a sweet little sheep face. When you wet it, the soap lathers up and acts as a flannel, and once the soap runs out all you have left is a biodegradable ball of wool.

» Little Beau Sheep Suffolk sheep felted soap, £9.45

11. Isla Apothecary

Isla Apothecary uses natural, vegan and ethically sourced ingredients for its bath, body, hair and skincare products, which are packaged in recyclable glass jars. The brand's plastic-free philosophy extends to online orders, too, with recyclable boxes and biodegradable packing chips used for delivery.

» Isla Apothecary body exfoliant & balm, £34