

# BAN THE BAG



## Australian states and territories are quitting single-use plastic bags:

Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory have already introduced bans on plastic bags. Western Australia, and Queensland have also committed to banning plastic bags by 2018. New South Wales has not yet indicated that a ban will be introduced.

### South Australia

**Banned:** Lightweight, checkout-style plastic bags

**Allowed:** Compostable bags, along with green bags, heavy retail bags, barrier bags, and paper bags

✓ BioPak bioplastic bags

### Tasmania

**Banned:** Lightweight, checkout-style plastic bags

**Allowed:** Compostable bags certified to Australian Standard AS4736, resealable zipper storage bags, heavier plastic bags (above 35 microns), lightweight meat, fruit and vegetable 'barrier' bags and plastic bags that are an integral part of the packaging

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### Australian Capital Territory

**Banned:** Single-use, lightweight polyethylene polymer plastic bags that are less than 35 microns in thickness, and degradable bags made from plastics

**Allowed:** Compostable bags that have been certified to Australian Standard AS4736

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### Northern Territory

**Banned:** Lightweight, checkout-style plastic bags

**Allowed:** Compostable bags, along with green bags, heavy retail bags, barrier bags, and paper bags

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### Queensland

**Banned:** Single-use, lightweight polyethylene polymer plastic bags that are less than 35 microns in thickness (including compostable bags), and degradable bags made from plastics

**Allowed:** Paper bags

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### Western Australia

**Banned (as of 01 July 2018):** all lightweight single-use plastic bags, including single-use compostable bags

**Allowed:** Paper bags

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### Victoria

**Banned:** Single-use, lightweight polyethylene polymer plastic bags (including compostable bags), and degradable bags made from plastics (effective 2019)

**Allowed:** Barrier bags for fruits, vegetables, meat and fish, garbage bags, bin liners, animal waste bags, woven polypropylene bags, hessian (jute) bags

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### New South Wales

No bans in place yet.

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## What this means for compostable bioplastic bags

In Queensland and Western Australia, retailers are banned from providing shoppers with all lightweight, single-use plastic bags including compostable bags. While we can all agree that there is a need to reduce single-use plastics, there are some instances where it is unavoidable. For example, compostable lightweight, single-use bags can be useful for collecting organic waste – like home compost or food scraps – as these bags will decompose in a home composting system returning nutrients to the soil in the process.

According to Warwick Hall, Vice President of the Australian BioPlastics Association (ABA) 'with some justification, it can be argued that an organically recyclable/compostable bag, such as those that meet the requirements of AS4736 or AS5810 presents much less of a potential hazard than a polyethylene bag because the compostable bag can be reused for the collection and disposal of organic waste to industrial or home composting or other organic recycling, which is much needed because organic waste is a large component of waste going to landfill'.

## What next?

In many instances, lightweight single-use bags are still required for hygienic reasons. Our bioplastic bags provide an eco-friendly alternative, made using Ecopond, a starch-based bioplastic that is certified compostable to Australian (AS4736) compost standards, and are certified home compostable (AS5810).

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