








| Plastic Identification Code | Type of plastic polymer | Properties | Common Packaging Applications |
|---|---|---|--|
|  | Polyethylene terephthalate (PET, PETE) | Clarity, strength, toughness, barrier to gas and moisture. | Soft drink, water and salad dressing bottles; peanut butter and jam jars |
|  | High-density polyethylene (HDPE) | Stiffness, strength, toughness, resistance to moisture, permeability to gas. | Water pipes, hula hoop rings, five gallon buckets, milk, juice and water bottles; the occasional shampoo / toiletry bottle |
|  | Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) | Versatility, ease of blending, strength, toughness. | Blister packaging for non-food items; cling films for non-food use. Not used for food packaging as the plasticisers needed to make natively rigid PVC flexible are usually toxic. Non-packaging uses are electrical cable insulation; rigid piping; vinyl records. |
|  | Low-density polyethylene (LDPE) | Ease of processing, strength, toughness, flexibility, ease of sealing, barrier to moisture. | Frozen food bags; squeezable bottles, e.g. honey, mustard; cling films; flexible container lids. |
|  | Polypropylene (PP) | Strength, toughness, resistance to heat, chemicals, grease and oil, versatile, barrier to moisture. | Reusable microwaveable ware; kitchenware; yogurt containers; margarine tubs; microwaveable disposable take-away containers; disposable cups; plates. |
|  | Polystyrene (PS) | Versatility, clarity, easily formed | Egg cartons; packing peanuts; disposable cups, plates, trays and cutlery; disposable take-away containers; |
|  | Other (often polycarbonate or ABS) | Dependent on polymers or combination of polymers | Beverage bottles; baby milk bottles. Non-packaging uses for polycarbonate: compact discs; "unbreakable" glazing; electronic apparatus housings; lenses including sunglasses, prescription glasses, automotive headlamps, riot shields, instrument panels; |