

Plastic Bag Investigation

What do I need

One or two regular supermarket plastic bags (the 'one use' type), a paper bag, a bag marketed as being biodegradable e.g. nappy/dog foul bag, shovel, lollypop sticks (to use as markers), marker pen.

What do I do

1. Describe what the bag looks like and keep a small sample or take a photograph, explain where it came from and what it's primary use is.
2. Find sheltered location in your garden and dig a one foot deep trench.
3. Place the bags in the trench, leaving a few inches gap between each and cover completely with soil.
4. Mark each bag clearly above ground with the lollypop sticks/other style marker.
5. Mark on a calendar 1 month intervals when the bags should be retrieved, examined and reburied.
6. Repeat this for approximately 6 months.
7. When examining the bags at one month intervals, remember to take a photograph and to describe in detail any changes in appearance.
8. At the end of the 6 months, collate all the results to write a report that could be used to explain to the public why the plastic bag levy is important. Include the words Landfill, Biodegradable, Decomposition, Sustainability in your report.





Plastic Bag Investigation

How Long Does a Plastic Bag Last in Landfill

Date:

Stage / Inspection number:

Bag	Description



Plastic Bag Investigation Report

Writing the Report

Complete the following statements to help write a report on your investigation.

Plastic bags are made from...

See the before and after dated photographs...

The bag that decomposed the most significantly was...

The bag that decomposed the least was...

From my investigation I have found that the supermarket bags...

From my investigation I estimate that the length of time for a supermarket 'one use' plastic bag to decompose completely would be...

If the number of plastic bags put to landfill in Scotland is not significantly decreased...

I think that the plastic bag levy is...