A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY

11 TIPS

AGAINST MICROPLASTICS

Status: January 2026

WASSER 3.0

INTRODUCTION

Microplastics are ubiquitous – in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat. Scientific studies have now detected microplastics in nearly all human organs, including the brain, lungs, and bloodstream. Although the long-term health effects have not yet been fully researched, the German Federal Environment Agency indicates there is sufficient evidence to assume health risks.

The good news: With simple everyday decisions, you can significantly reduce your personal microplastic exposure. This manual provides you with eleven concrete measures – from immediately implementable behavioral changes to socio-political engagement.

Part 1

Individual Measures

1 Tap Instead of Bottle

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★★★★★ Very High
Long-term Impact	★★★★★ Very High
Feasibility	Possible immediately

Implementation

- Switch to tap water
- Use glass or stainless-steel bottles when on the go
- When buying mineral water: choose glass bottles

Why it works

Studies show that people who drink water exclusively from plastic bottles may ingest more than 20 times as many microplastic particles as tap water drinkers. Even glass bottles contain more particles than tap water due to the filling processes.

2 Hot? Only in Glass!

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★★★★★ Very High
Long-term Impact	★★★★★ Very High
Feasibility	Possible immediately

Implementation

- Use glass or ceramic dishes for the microwave
- Use stainless steel or glass containers for storage
- Never let plastic come into contact with hot food
- Avoid canned goods (BPA in inner coatings)

Why it works

When heating food in plastic containers, significant amounts of micro- and nanoplastics are released. Heat massively accelerates the release of plastic particles and additives such as Bisphenol-A (BPA).

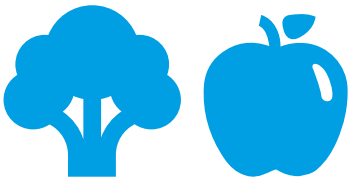
3 Fresh Instead of Processed

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★★★☆☆ Medium
Long-term Impact	★★★★★ Very High
Feasibility	Gradual transition

Implementation

- Choose fresh, unpackaged foods
- Shop at farmers markets or package-free stores
- Cook yourself instead of using ready meals
- For packaged products: prefer short supply chains



Why it works

US studies show that highly processed foods contain significantly more microplastics than minimally processed ones. Storing food in plastic packaging leads to migration of particles into the food.

4 Natural Fibers on Your Skin

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★★☆☆☆ Low – Mittel
Long-term Impact	★★★★★ Very High
Feasibility	Gradual replacement

Implementation

- For new purchases: choose natural fibers like cotton, linen, wool, or hemp
- Wear existing clothing longer (fiber shedding stabilizes after 10 washes)
- Only buy functional clothing when truly needed
- Choose home textiles (bedding, curtains, carpets) made from natural fibers

Why it works

Synthetic fabrics like polyester, nylon, and elastane release thousands of microfibers with every wear and wash.
These enter our body and the environment through the skin, breathing air, and wastewater. About 60-70% of all textiles today consist of synthetic fibers.

5 Open the Windows!

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★★★★★ Very High
Long-term Impact	★★★★☆ Hoch
Feasibility	Possible immediately

Implementation

- Open the windows for at least 10-15 minutes daily
- Use vacuum cleaners with HEPA filters
- Wipe surfaces regularly with a damp cloth
- Wash bedding and contact-intensive textiles frequently

Why it works

Inhalation of microplastics occurs mainly indoors, not outdoors. House dust binds plastic particles from synthetic textiles and furnishings.


Easy-Care
Off
Cottons/Coloureds
Very Dry
Extra Dry
Cupboard Dry
Cupboard Dry Plus
Iron Dry
Cupboard Dry
Rapid
Iron Dry
Programme time
Woollen Finish
warm 20
warm 40

6 Wash Right with the 70% Formula

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★★★★★ Very High
Long-term Impact	★★★★★ Very High
Feasibility	Possible immediately

Implementation

- Lower the temperature: Wash below 30°C, cold if possible. Heat significantly increases fiber abrasion.
- Reduce spin speed: Lower spin speed means less mechanical friction.
- Reduce detergent: Less detergent = less chemical stress on fibers. Often half the recommended amount is enough.

Why it works

Washing synthetic textiles is responsible for about 35% of the microplastics that enter the marine environment each year. With three simple adjustments when washing, microplastic abrasion can be reduced by up to 70%.


Easy-Care
Off
Cottons/Coloureds
Very Dry
Extra Dry
Cupboard Dry
Cupboard Dry Plus
Iron Dry
Cupboard Dry
Rapid
Iron Dry
Programme time
Woollen Finish
warm 20
warm 40
start

7 Wash Less and Dry Gently

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★★★★★ Very High
Long-term Impact	★★★★★ Very High
Feasibility	Possible immediately

Zusätzliche Maßnahmen

- Only wash with a full drum (less friction between textiles)
- Wash less frequently – often airing them out is enough
- Wear the same clothing longer: After about 10 washes, fiber abrasion stabilizes at a low level
- Hang laundry on the line instead of using the dryer. This reduces abrasion and protects the material.

Myth alert

Retrofittable microplastic filters are often advertised as a solution. But many of these filters are themselves made of plastic – so you're fighting plastic with plastic. They also require regular replacement and generate additional costs. The smarter solution lies in adjusting the washing behavior itself.

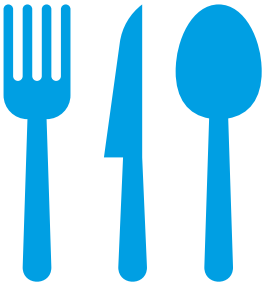
8 Plastic-Free Kitchen

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★★★★★ Very High
Long-term Impact	★★★★☆ High
Feasibility	Possible immediately

Implementation

- Use loose tea or tea bags made of paper/cotton
- Use wooden cutting boards
- Use wooden or stainless-steel cooking utensils instead of plastic
- Use biodegradable cleaning products



Why it works

Steeping a plastic tea bag at 95°C can release significant amounts of nano- and microplastics. Plastic cutting boards also release particles during use.

Part 2

Social Engagement

9 Spread the Word

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★★☆☆☆ Low
Long-term Impact	★★★★★ Very High
Feasibility	Medium (requires initiative)

Implementation

- Organize or attend information events
- Initiate local cleanup actions
- Raise awareness in schools and kindergartens
- Talk to local retailers about plastic-free alternatives
- Participate in citizen science projects (e.g., water sampling)

Why it works

Systemic change begins locally. The multiplier effect of informed citizens can sensitize municipalities, schools, and local businesses and move them to concrete action.

10 Apply Political Pressure

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★☆☆☆☆ Low
Long-term Impact	★★★★★ Very High
Feasibility	Low to medium

Implementation

- Sign petitions for stricter microplastic regulation
- Use citizen consultation hours with your elected representative
- Participate in consultations on environmental legislation
- Check party programs for environmental positions

Why it works

In 2023, the EU restricted intentionally added microplastics in cosmetics and other products – further regulations (tire abrasion, textile production) are being discussed. Political pressure accelerates these processes.

11 Finance Change

Impact Rating

Impact	Evaluation
Immediate Impact:	★★☆☆☆ Low
Long-term Impact	★★★★★ Very High
Feasibility	Very easy

Implementation

- Donate to non-profit organizations (tax-deductible)
- Use educational offerings (e.g., seminar series from Wasser 3.0)
- Participate in citizen science projects
- Share information on social networks

Why it works

Non-profit organizations like Wasser 3.0 gGmbH from Karlsruhe develop innovative technologies for detecting and removing microplastics from water. The organization was awarded the German Sustainability Prize and follows the approach "detect – remove – reuse". All profits flow entirely into research and education projects.

Impact
OVERVIEW TABLE

Impact Rating

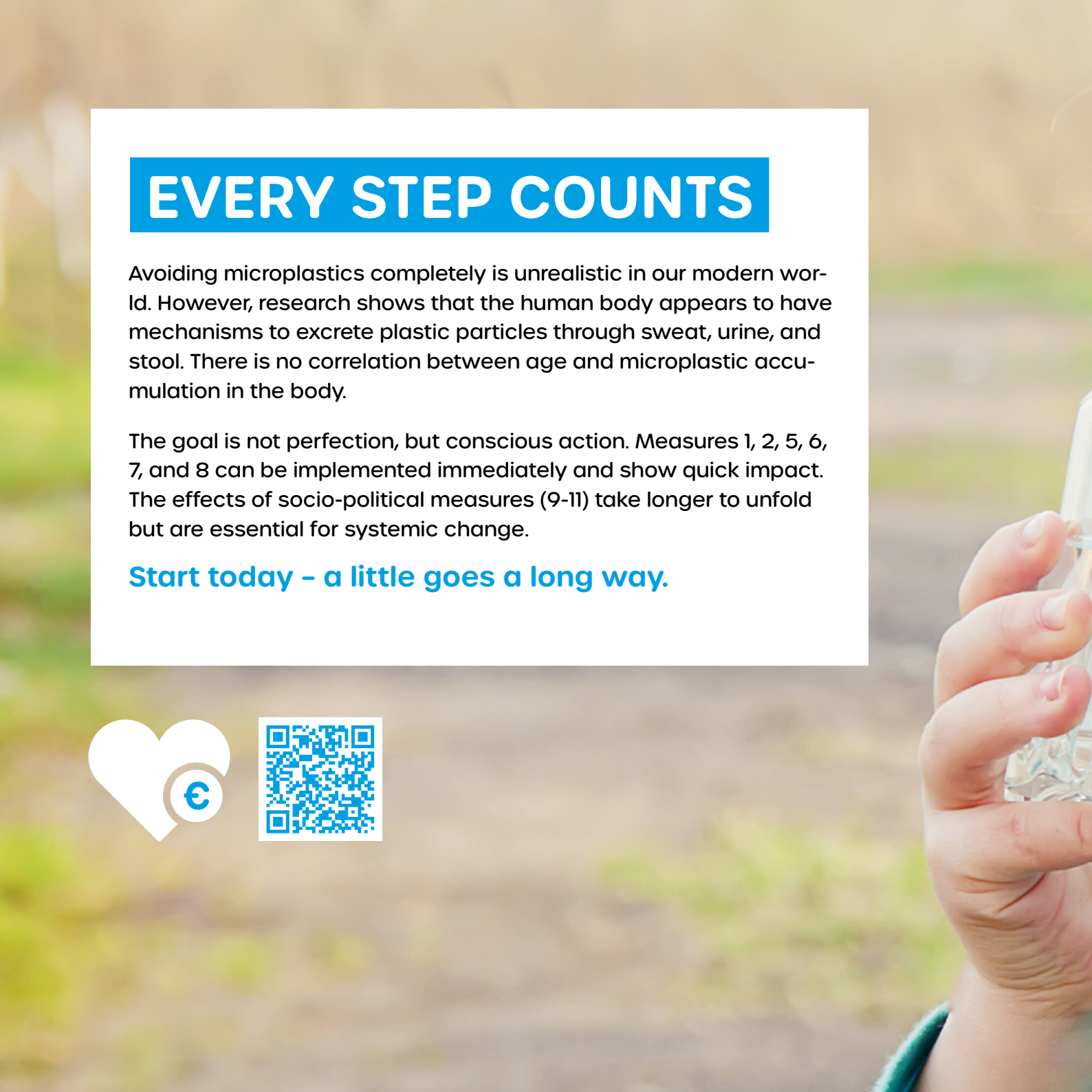
Measure	Quick	Long-term
1. Tap Instead of Bottle	★★★★★	★★★★★
2. Hot? Only in Glass!	★★★★★	★★★★★
3. Fresh Instead of Processed	★★★☆☆	★★★★★
4. Natural Fibers on Your Skin	★★☆☆☆	★★★★★
5. Open the Windows!	★★★★★	★★★★☆
6. Wash Right (70% Formula)	★★★★★	★★★★★
7. Wash Less & Dry Gently	★★★★★	★★★★☆
8. Plastic-Free Kitchen	★★★★★	★★★★☆
9. Spread the Word	★★☆☆☆	★★★★★
10. Apply Political Pressure	★☆☆☆☆	★★★★★
11. Finance Change	★★☆☆☆	★★★★★

EVERY STEP COUNTS

Avoiding microplastics completely is unrealistic in our modern world. However, research shows that the human body appears to have mechanisms to excrete plastic particles through sweat, urine, and stool. There is no correlation between age and microplastic accumulation in the body.

The goal is not perfection, but conscious action. Measures 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8 can be implemented immediately and show quick impact. The effects of socio-political measures (9-11) take longer to unfold but are essential for systemic change.

Start today – a little goes a long way.




EVERYONE IS PART
OF THE SOLUTION.

IMPRINT

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