

Water bar – Do the environment a favour and drink tap water



The bottled water has become one of the most common imagery for drinking water. However the production and consumption of bottles is having a large impact on our environment due to intensive resource use and waste generation. Drinking water directly from the tap could solve these environmental problems!

Unfortunately many used plastic bottles end up in landfills and as litter in our environment, becoming especially dangerous for our marine ecosystems¹. However access to safer drinking water sources has increased from 76% in 1990 to 91% in 2015². In the European Union, where there is a history of over 30 years of water policies, tap water intended for human consumption is safe and guaranteed by the [Drinking Water Directive](#), in accordance with the standards set by the [World Health Organization](#). The bad news is that countries such as Italy, Germany and France, where tap water is perfectly drinkable, are among the top consumers of bottled water in Europe and even worldwide³. Moreover demand for bottled water is growing also in the developing countries. The main concern about bottled water is its packaging and the overall effect it has on our environment. So does it not make sense to switch from drinking bottled water to drinking tap water? Especially where tap water is certified for being safe? Not to mention the financial advantages of consuming tap water, being much cheaper than buying bottled water.

For this reason the water bar is an excellent way to show that tap water is as good, if not better, than bottled water. Organising it requires only your wit to pour into glasses different types of bottled water among the glasses with tap water and invite participants to taste, if they can, the difference between them. Making it look like a bar might make it even more attractive!

Objectives

- ▶ Raise awareness about the amount of packaging waste produced by drinking bottled water
 - ▶ Promote the fact that actions to reduce packaging waste can be taken on a daily basis
 - ▶ Raise awareness about good habits for waste reduction, including drinking tap water
 - ▶ Raise awareness about the environmental and social issues associated with bottled water
- See more facts and get inspired from the Information material section*

What you need

- ▶ A **stand/table** to lay out the bottles and glasses of the different types of water. You can organize it as a bar or even like a laboratory.
- ▶ A **location** where to place your stand
- ▶ **Glass jars** for water and **glass cups** to give out the samples. Remember to note for yourself which glass contains which type of water. You can use coloured stickers to distinguish the different types of water
- ▶ **Information and communication material**: Advertise your action in your community. Prepare information materials such as facts about bottle packaging, [how to avoid packaging waste](#) and be prepared to disseminate it. Get inspired by checking the *More information* section below.

¹ [Bottled water factsheet](#)

² [WHO, Fact sheet Nr.391, June 2015](#)

³ [Beverage Marketing Corporation & International Bottled Water Association, Top Bottled Water Consuming Countries, March 2016](#)



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HINTS: Avoid printing excessive amounts of posters or leaflets for the event and recycle the bottles bought for the water tasting

Preparing the action

Before the EWWR

- ▶ Decide on the brands of the bottled water. Keep the labels because they will indicate the materials the bottle was made of and also the type of water. Register that information.
- ▶ Prepare a hand-out on the costs of bottled water in terms of waste and the effects on the environment but also the reasons why tap water is as safe and as good as bottled water. This can also be used as a backup if participants ask questions. Have a look at the *More information* section below
- ▶ Decide on your target audience, it could be families, teenagers, your neighbours, colleagues and so on
- ▶ Determine the time frame for the action
- ▶ Prepare a document where you can register the participants and also their feedback. This can be organised also as a grading system for each type of water, for this a questionnaire could be prepared
- ▶ To set up the water samples, purchase the bottled water before

TIP: If you want to make it more fun for children, you can even set up a blindfolded tasting session

Pre-EWWR (two weeks beforehand)

- ▶ Enhance advertisement of your event
- ▶ If you don't have enough glasses, you can encourage participants to bring their own. Always avoid using non-reusable cups
- ▶ In order to avoid waste we suggest promoting the water bar digitally, via mailings, social and other media. Use facts on packaging, waste prevention measures and bottled water to create interest

Implementing the action = days of the action!

- ▶ Organise your stand with the water containers and their tags in the front (you can mark them with numbers, letters, colours or anything else). There should also be a place for glasses, not used and used
- ▶ Start inviting individuals to taste the types of water
- ▶ Register the feedback from the tasting
- ▶ Smile and promote tap water over bottled water to encourage packaging waste reduction
- ▶ Ask participants for their contact details to share results and pictures after the event
- ▶ Take pictures and videos

Evaluation and feedback

After the EWWR

- ▶ Analyse the questionnaires or grading documents where you have registered the information
- ▶ **Give feedback to your Coordinator:** number of participants, amount of waste avoided, etc.
- ▶ **Send back pictures and videos** of your action to your Coordinator
- ▶ Don't forget to send the feedback to the participants, but also the pictures, videos
- ▶ If it is possible, keep track of the participants and see if you made a positive change in their lifestyle and daily habits



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More information

- ▶ **Support Documents:** [Waste Diary for packaging waste](#) (to fill in) – [Waste Diary for packaging waste](#) (to print)
- ▶ [Tips to reduce packaging waste](#)
- ▶ **Share your commitment to waste reduction with our online tool:** www.ewwrcommitment.eu
- ▶ **More content from the EWWR website**
 - [More tips to reduce waste](#)
 - [Reduce waste](#)
 - [12 good habits for reducing waste](#)
- ▶ [The EWWR guide of good practices](#)
- ▶ **Examples of actions**
 - [Current water fountains to avoid bottled water consumption \(ES\)](#)
 - [Tap water: "cheers!" and less waste @ VUB \(BE\)](#)
 - [Adopt a fountain - ADOTTA UNA FONTANA\(IT\)](#)
 - [Life without plastic cups is fantastic - La vie sans gobelet plastique, c'est fantastique \(BE\)](#)
- ▶ **Interesting links**
 - [Top Bottled Water Consuming Countries](#)
 - [Bottled Water Waste Facts](#)
 - [Bottled Water Facts](#)
 - [How to ditch bottled water in 2016: An action plan](#)
 - Video: [Is Bottled Water Really Better Than Tap Water?](#)
- ▶ **EWWR Coordinator's website/contacts:** www.ewwr.eu/en/coordinators/ewwr
- ▶ **European Week for Waste Reduction:** www.ewwr.eu contact@ewwr.eu [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#)



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