



As you've probably heard, **New Jersey recently enacted the nation's strictest bag ban**. This means that beginning in May 2022, plastic bags will no longer be available through grocery, retail, and restaurants. With a few exemptions, paper bags will also be banned in supermarkets over 2,500 square feet.

But, why wait? **You can start preparing for this change now**. Here's our advice:

- **Use what you have.** If you've already got a closet full of bags, try them out. That may be all you need.
- **Think inside the box.** Consider reusing cardboard boxes or a crate to carry your groceries.
- **Pick a durable bag.** If you are in the market for a new reusable bag, keep in mind that they typically need to be used hundreds or thousands of times to offset the carbon footprint from their manufacture.
- **Find a bag you love.** There are many different styles out there, so be sure to prioritize a bag you'll be proud to carry with you.
- **Consider your lifestyle.** Need one that fits in a pocket or in your trunk? Lugging your groceries home by foot or loading them into your car? Pick a bag that will serve your needs.
- **Go recycled.** Bags made from recycled plastic typically have a low carbon footprint; however, pollution is still a concern with any plastic product.
- **Understand cotton.** Canvas is a delightful natural product, but since cotton has a high carbon footprint, look for bags made from recycled material (eg, old jeans).
- **Bring it with you.** While this might seem obvious, for many of us, it's not easy. Be sure to try out different strategies until you find a habit that sticks.