

SUFFOCATION

Group Project / Qiuyan Wang+Dasiy Dadson
Photography / Over Packaging

Mix Magazine (Colour Hive) + L1 & L2 BA (Hons) Interior Design + BA (Hons)
Photography + KASK University of Arts Belgium

We need packaging to protect the product being transported from getting damaged. Packaging must keep the product safe, for time it takes to travel between the manufacturing facility and the retailer. However, over packaging is becoming a big problem to the environment as it is unsustainable.

Plastic packaging is extremely wasteful and affects the earth's ecosystems which we rely on. Some plastics are now recyclable, 14% of the plastic packaging used globally goes to recycling plants. However, only 9% gets recycled. For those plastics that cannot be recycled, they remain in our weakened ecosystems. Only 40% are taken to landfills and are left to disintegrate that takes at least 500 years, which unfortunately means we have years of pollution leaking into our soil, water as well as damage our wildlife on the land and in the sea.

In the early 1990s, researchers noticed the amount of plastic washing up on beaches and in harbours was dramatically increasing and they found that 60-80% of the waste in the ocean was non-biodegradable plastic. In the past, people used paper bags instead of plastic bags, thus, plastic bags became more common due to their long durability and low price for producing and transporting.

Moreover, they were lighter than the average paper bag which also means paper bags had a higher carbon footprint. In recent years people have started to find alternatives instead of using plastic as it is fatal to the environment. People have started using craft paper as packaging. Thereby, it is not as durable as plastic, thus, they have slowly started cutting down plastic but still use it alongside craft paper. However, this is not fixing the problem of plastic, so we need to come up with a better alternative.



SUFFOCATION

EDITOR / Qiuyan Wang
COPYWRITER / Dasiy Dadson
PHOTOGRAPHERS / Ella Vincent Maddy Baron Clark Lyubomila Valova
ASSISTANTS / Emily Spooner Nadege Chahuau Rachel Ferguson Amelie Mortier



Besides the materials we could use to replace plastic when packaging, there is another problem need to be solved, which is the presentation of the product. We all know that first impressions count, however, nobody really thinks about the impact that packaging has on the environment just for it to look "pretty", "luxurious" or "unique".

Plastic packaging could be replaced with Corrugated Bubble Wrap, Air Pillows Made of Recycled Materials, Cornstarch Packaging, Mushroom Packaging, Seaweed Packaging, Recycled Cardboard and Paper, Eco-friendly Plastic and Recycled Plastics, Organic Fabrics.

Although these alternatives have their advantages, they have a disadvantage which can deny all the advantages - high price. The inconvenience of collection of waste materials, the complex of manufacture and the limitation of technology cause the raising of price. Nevertheless, there is another solution for the reduction of over packaging.

The situation of over packaging is getting worse as online shopping become more convenient. To ensure the product has been protected, the merchants will use excessive bubble wraps, wrapping papers or cartons. When buyers purchase something they do not particularly need, then they will return the products. This action will cause more packaging as buyers try to return the product without defect so that they can have full refund. Hence, we should deliberate what we really need, know how to control our desire and do not over indulge it.

This solution is relatively easier and quicker to achieve reduction of over packaging, but it is also the most difficult one for people to achieve.