Why TrashBlitz?

trashblitz

TrashBlitz is about science driving solutions. The goal of the movement is to stop the flow of plastic from land to sea. To do this we need data.

Three key elements of TrashBlitz:

1 Get partners on board. This is perhaps the most important step, since for solutions to work, there must be wide agreement among partner organizations, companies and local leadership.

2 Collect data throughout the region of interest. For this we will need to employ targeted protocols (e.g. river, road, beach) to gather data on the most abundant types of plastic, associated brands, and abundance (how much is out there) and distribution (where is it located).

3 Bring partners together to create data-driven solutions plan. We strongly encourage a Solutions Summit after all data has been collected, which will determine which items to address, what strategy to employ, and set deadlines to achieve partners goals. Re-group often to measure success.

    a. Plan for a Solutions Summit.

    The focus here is to *collaborate with partners to agree on a strategy*.

- Top 20 trash items and brands
- Map of survey area with survey locations
- Map of distribution and abundance of trash items
- Partners determine the best strategy to address the most polluting trash items and brands.

    b. Create a Trash Blitz Report

    c. Come up with a timeline.

    Decide who does what by when. This clarity is essential to getting the job done.

    d. Regroup

    Set a date to regroup in 6-12 months to review the strategy, make changes if needed, and march on

TrashBlitz Survey Methods

The plastic pollution movement is focused on turning off the tap of plastic waste flowing to the ocean, by data-driven upstream policy and systems change, realizing that prevention is key to a long-term strategy. Countries worldwide are asking how to measure their plastic pollution footprint, resulting in a United Nations GESAMP report (Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection) outlining standardized measuring tools. We have expanded the methodologies from the UN Report for beaches and riverbanks to roadsides in the urban setting.

TrashBlitz aligns with global NGOs, like Surfrider and Break Free From Plastic. We all measure plastic pollution and give municipalities, business leaders, and the public the data they need to focus on solutions to mitigate the problem. The TrashBlitz methods can be used in any city and any watershed across the globe.

Overview of River, Road and Beach methods

We are focused on collecting data that can tell us what we need to know about local plastic pollution, so we can do something about it. Roads are where much of the litter enters the environment, rivers transport the litter to the ocean, and beaches accumulate and break down trash into smaller pieces. We focus on these three regions to assess the types, sources, and fate of plastic pollution in the environment.

Equipment list

Preparing to collect data and cleanup in rivers, roads, or beaches with TrashBlitz is simple.

Be ready to get dirty

You'll be outside in the environment for a full hour, first thing you'll need is to dress accordingly.

You should consider wearing a hat, walking shoes, long sleeves, and sunblock if you need it. Don't forget your reusable water bottle!

If you're using the **web app** you'll need:

- Bucket, box or bag to collect your trash
- Gloves to pick up trash (ideally reusable, garden gloves work great!)
- Fully charged smartphone or tablet to use the web app

If you're using the **data card** you'll *additionally* need:

- Copy of data card
- Clipboard and pen or pencil
- Phone or watch to record your 60 minute start and top times.
- Phone or home computer so you can gather the start and stop latitude and longitude.

Choosing a place to survey *(talk to us first!)*

Creating a statistically sound sampling plan is critical to having unbiased data that reflects what products/packaging and brands are the biggest polluters. You want your data to represent the true item type, brand distribution and abundance. Let us help you determine where your survey sites should be. We can randomize where your sites should be on a map based on geographic features (rivers, roads and beaches) or land uses (rural, commercial, industrial, residential...).

Protocol for surveying along a Riverbank, Roadside, or Coastline

Remember, this is a rigorous survey and a cleanup. We are documenting the items and brands we find so that we can go beyond a cleanup and engage corporate and government leaders with data-driven solutions.

Where are you?

- If surveying a river, walk from the water's edge to the highest water mark, or barrier if there is one. This is generally the highest point where the water rose, and there's often a line of debris or a sharp change in the color of concrete to indicate the high water mark. Alternatively you can start at the top of the river bank.

- If surveying a beach, walk from the water's edge to the high tide line picking up everything in your path.

- If surveying a road, pick up what's on or adjacent to the curb to whatever barrier is in place, whether it's a wall or treeline. Do not go into the street or on private property. Your safety is the most important thing.

Start picking up trash for a minimum of 60 MINUTES! Here are some guidelines:

- Work in small groups, ideally 2-4 people per group with one person entering data while the others help pick up the trash and call out the trash information to the person recording the data.

- Getting accurate data is important, take your time to properly catalogue what you find.

- Note: The web app was built with the flexibility of being able to add multiple items at a time. You can choose to cleanup for the full hour and record your data at the end of your cleanup efforts. You'll miss out on some of the lat/longs per each item but either way, you'll get good data!

Under **resources** you'll find the **"TrashBlitz app" button**. Click on that and start filling out the information as prompted. When finished entering your group info, click on the "Let's Go!" button, this will automatically capture your location. Continue to follow the guide on the web app clicking on the arrows on the bottom right to advance to the next screen. Once you've completed the tutorial, hit the "Ok got it!" button when you're ready to begin!

- Before you start walking take a moment to **familiarize yourself with the app by checking out the 6 main categories**. Click on each one to look at the types of items available within each category, this will help speed up data collection

- **Okay, now you're ready! Pick up everything** as you walk 60 minutes from the start point to the stop point. Because we are doing both data collection and cleanup, we want everything, from tires to torn corners of chip bags, partial straws to a fragment of a fork, EVERYTHING!

- **Once you're ready to enter start entering your first piece of trash follow these steps:**
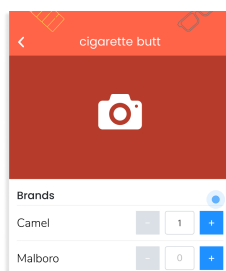
    a. Determine which **main category** it falls under and click on that
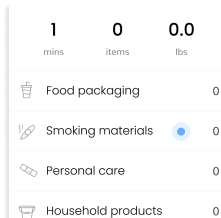
    b. Then **click on your item** of trash
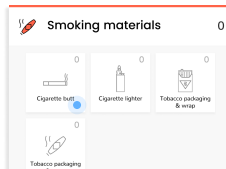
    c. Enter brand data when available or recognizable (even if it's a single letter or shape of a bottle that's familiar) by **clicking on the plus sign next to the brand name** and add a photo if you like!

- **Continue logging everything you find for the next hour.**

- Once you're done, click on **"Finish & submit"**

- Grab a photo of your haul and celebrate your contribution by checking out your team's stats! Whether you throw your trash on a tarp or snap a picture of your bucket, **make sure you snap a picture**.

- Finally, hit **"Confirm & submit"** and celebrate a job well done!

How to enter data the old fashioned way using a data card?

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First step is to record accurate information about where you are and the site you're going to survey.
You'll start by marking your starting time and starting location in latitude and longitude.

Get your location

To get lat/long you'll need to use a cell phone. Go to
Google Maps (**https://www.google.com/maps**) and
mark a pin exactly where you started and stopped
your transect. A box should appear describing the pin,
including latitude and longitude.
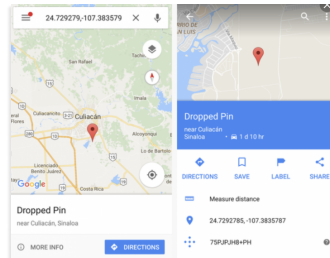
Start time	Start latitude	Start longitude

Start picking up trash for a minimum of 60 MINUTES! Here are some guidelines:

- Pick up all trash first, then record data. BUT, you have the option to record data on the data card as you walk along your transect. Either way, you'll get good data, but we suggest waiting till the end so that you pick up more trash!

- **Pick up everything** as you walk 60 minutes from the start point to the stop point. Because we are doing both data collection and cleanup, we want everything, from tires to torn corners of chip bags, partial straws to a fragment of a fork, EVERYTHING!

- When you're done, **record the total count of items** according to the list on the Data Card. If you're using the Web App, it will total the lists for you once you stop the transect. On the data card you can use tick marks to count while you walk along your linear transect.

- **Record brands when you see them**. On the datacard, if an item has a brand name or logo, even if it's a single letter or shape of a bottle that's familiar, then write the name in the "Brand" column with the number in parenthesis.

- **Record your stop time and location**. At the end of your 60 minute linear transect record your "stop time" and "stop latitude and longitude" on the data card just like you did at the beginning. If you're using the web app, you'll press "Stop" and the app will record your stop time and location.

End time	End latitude	End longitude

- **Tally your total for "Items" and "Brands".** It should look like this on the data card. If you're using the web app, it will do it for you.

Cigarette butts	Marlboro 4 Camel 2 Parliament Newport Pall Mall 1	NN̄ ll

You'll now need to use a smartphone or computer to enter your data on the TrashBlitz.org website.