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## The Green Girl's Guide to 'what's the scoop on your dog's poop?'

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You don't want it in your yard, your neighbor doesn't want it in his yard, so what do you do with it?

Most of us use plastic bags to pick up doggy doo and then toss it in the trash. You thought you would get green points for reusing those bags, didn't you?



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Not quite.

Plastic bags like the ones from the grocery store take thousands of years to decompose in landfills. (I hope you read my previous column about the benefits of canvas bags!) It doesn't make much sense to scoop the poop, a naturally biodegradable substance, into a bag that takes more than 10 lifetimes to degrade.

Luckily we have options.

One option is composting. Before you say "eeew," read on. PetSmart sells the Doggie Dooley Pet Waste Disposal Systems, which is a compost bin just for poo. You dig a hole, put the compost bin on top, follow the directions and create your own doggy septic system. However, make sure you choose a location away from your food compost bin or vegetable garden.

Another option is to use a biodegradable bag to dispose of the stuff. Several brands offer corn- or wheat-based biodegradable bags that break down in a matter of days instead of lifetimes. BioBag is one company that makes 100 percent biodegradable and 100 percent compostable bags from non-GMO corn. These bags can be found at Petco, Whole Foods Supermarket or bought online at [www.biobagusa.com](http://www.biobagusa.com).

Although potty training your St. Bernard or Maltese may not be feasible (although amusing to picture), there is always the flushing option. If you don't mind running through the house with freshly scooped poop, there is a new bag that dissolves in water and is designed to be flushed down the toilet. The bag is

made from polyvinyl alcohol, which is an environmentally friendly, non-toxic sister to the compound that makes up Elmer's glue. These translucent green, 8-by-10-inch bags can be found online at [www.handicappedpets.com](http://www.handicappedpets.com) or ask your local pet store.

Owning a pet is a big responsibility, but we also have a huge responsibility to our planet. So, at your next trip to the doggy park, instead of talking about how cute little Jo Jo is, ask your fellow dog owners what they do with their doo.

*Information supplemented by Tracey Ritchie.*

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*Supplemented by staff members of Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, West Palm Beach, in association with Florida Atlantic University. For more information, go to [www.pinejog.fau.edu](http://www.pinejog.fau.edu).*

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