

PLASTIC FREE. PERIOD FAQs

If you're just starting out on your plastic free period journey you've no doubt got a few questions and the practicalities of switching from disposable products. We've collected answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about period pants, reusable pads and menstrual cups. If you still have unanswered questions, we've also added links to a variety of other FAQ pages.

It's worth noting that all brands are slightly different so once you've decided on which one to try, we'd definitely recommend looking at the FAQs specific to their products.

Menstrual Cups

How does it work? A menstrual cup is inserted like a tampon and some brands can be worn for up to 12 hours depending on the cup and your flow. You will need to fold your cup before you insert it. Different techniques can be seen in this [Mooncup video](#).

How do you know when it needs emptying? Some cups can be worn for up to 12 hours but it's recommended that when you first start using a cup you check it after 4 hours and you'll start to build an understanding of how often you'll need to empty it.

Is emptying it messy? It's best to remove the cup while over the toilet or in the shower but you should have little to no spillage.

Do you need to wash it after emptying? You should wash your cup at least once every 10-12 hours. If you empty it more often than that you don't have to wash it every time – that's up to you.

How do you clean a cup? Hot water and a vagina-friendly soap is all you need. The advice is not to wash your cup with a soap if you're not sure of the ingredients. Advice varies slightly with different brands so please check the instructions on your chosen product.

Can I go to the toilet with a cup in? Yes. You may find that it moves down a bit after a bowel movement but you can just nudge it back into place.

Does it ever leak? It shouldn't! But wearing a backup pad is useful when you first start wearing a cup for peace of mind and extra protection while you're learning to use a cup.

Can I swim when wearing a cup? Yes, you can continue to do all kinds of exercise whilst wearing a cup.

Lots more questions and answers can be found on the websites of [Mooncup](#), [Allmatters](#) and [Putacupinit](#)

Period Pants

How long can you wear a pair of period pants for? The answer to this will depend on the brand and your flow, but can be anywhere between 8 and 24 hours. For example, a pair of WUKA's 'light flow' pants will hold 1-2 tampons worth of liquid; a 'heavy flow' pair can hold up to 4 tampons worth. Modibodi offer a Maxi-24hrs pair!

How can you tell when you need to change the pants? Period pants should feel comfortable and dry, so if you start to notice dampness then it's time to put on a fresh pair.

Do they leak? Period pants should not leak if you change them when you need to. But many brands recommend that you try them out at home first to understand how they work for your flow.

Can they go in with your normal washing? Yes, but they should be rinsed soon after use – do not allow them to dry out after wearing. Then they can join the rest of your washing but don't use fabric conditioner as this can affect the fabric's function. Line dry the pants as tumble drying can also affect the absorbency. Washing instructions will vary between products so make sure you check the specific advice for your chosen product.

Visit the websites of brands [WUKA](#), [Cheeky](#) and [Revolundies](#) for more period pants FAQs

Washable pads

Can they be washed with my other laundry? Yes, no need to separate them, but as with period pants, it's advisable not to use fabric softener as this can reduce their absorbency. Washing instructions will vary between products so make sure you check the specific advice for your product.

What do I do with used pads when out and about? When you change your pad just pop it into a carry/travel pouch and wash when you get home. Most brands will have a pouch to go with their pads.

How often should I change my pad? Reusable pads work in the same way as disposable pads, so you'd probably be looking at changing your pad every 4-6 hours depending on your flow.

Visit the websites of brands [Ecofemme](#) and [Cheeky](#) for more FAQs on washable pads.