

ENGLISH

ECO BRICKS

**REUSING PLASTIC, WORKING
TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE PLANET**



**An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige**
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



ÓGRAS
• don Ghaeilge • don Óige •

ECOBRICKS



When we throw our plastic away in the rubbish – that is not the end of the story. Depending on the kind of plastic, it takes up to 1000 YEARS (sometimes even more) to break down and fully biodegrade. We can recycle some kinds of plastic easily in Ireland, but for the most part we can't recycle soft plastics at all, and so they usually go into the general waste bin.

This impacts the world in an awful lot of negative ways, for example it kills animals and birds, plastic is a product of fracking which has an enormous carbon footprint and plastic pollution can be seen everywhere, on islands with no human population and at the bottom of the ocean in places that people cannot even dive as far as – it is predicted that at the rate that plastic is gathering in the planet's oceans, the amount of plastic's in earth's seas will exceed the amount of fish that live in them before 2050.

So – what can we do about it? Well firstly we should all be conscientious about the amount of plastic that cannot be recycled that we use in the first place, and make an effort to cut down or cut it out completely, or to reuse the plastic we do use. After that, we can start an Ecobrick at home!

What is an Ecobrick? An Ecobrick is a handmade brick, made out of pieces of soft plastic that you cannot reuse. When you have a few Ecobricks, you can use them to make various things – there are even places on earth where Ecobricks are used to build houses!

How to make an Ecobrick: Take a large (1.5-2.5L) plastic bottle that is empty, clean and dry*. Any time that you must use soft plastic, or anything else that you can't recycle, thoroughly wash and dry it*, then put it in your bottle. Push it down to the bottom of the bottle with a long and hard stick (such as a drum stick or wooden spoon!). Do this with every piece of plastic you use – be sure to push every piece down properly, leaving no spaces or air pockets – the ecobricks need to be **strong, heavy and hard!** Below is a picture to help you to ensure the correct weight for your Ecobrick – if you stand on it and no dents appear, it's good!

*This is important – every Ecobrick needs to be able to last for years and years, and so we can't give anything like dirt, microorganisms or mould the chance to grow in it!



**An Ecobrick's Min. Weight =
Bottle Volume x 0.33**

For Example...

2000ml = min. weight 660g

500ml = min. weight 165g

GEA Standard Minimum Density = 0.33 g/ml

GEA Standard Max Density = 0.7 g/ml

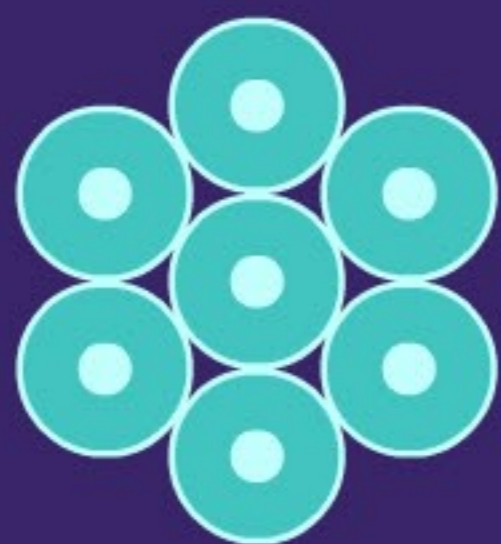
What can you do with your completed Ecobrick? There are a few 'drop off points' for Ecobricks in Ireland – you can find the one closest to you at ecobricks.org/exchange, but with the state of the world as it is with Covid, why don't you use your Ecobrick to make something nice for the family for your house or garden?

There are many techniques for building with Ecobricks but the easiest, quickest and perhaps most fun Ecobrick application, is to make the Milstein module for horizontal building and the Dieleman Lego module for vertical building. With modules, you can create benches, tables, chairs, structures and plenty of other things.

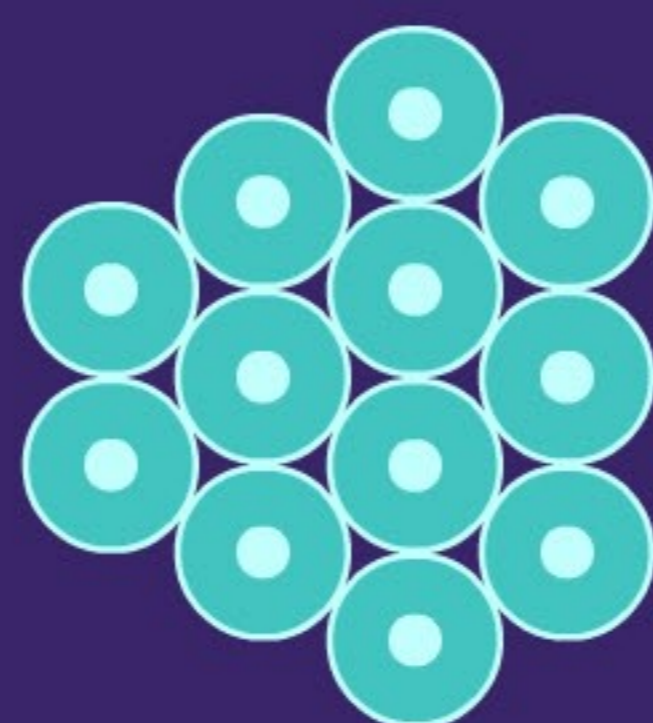
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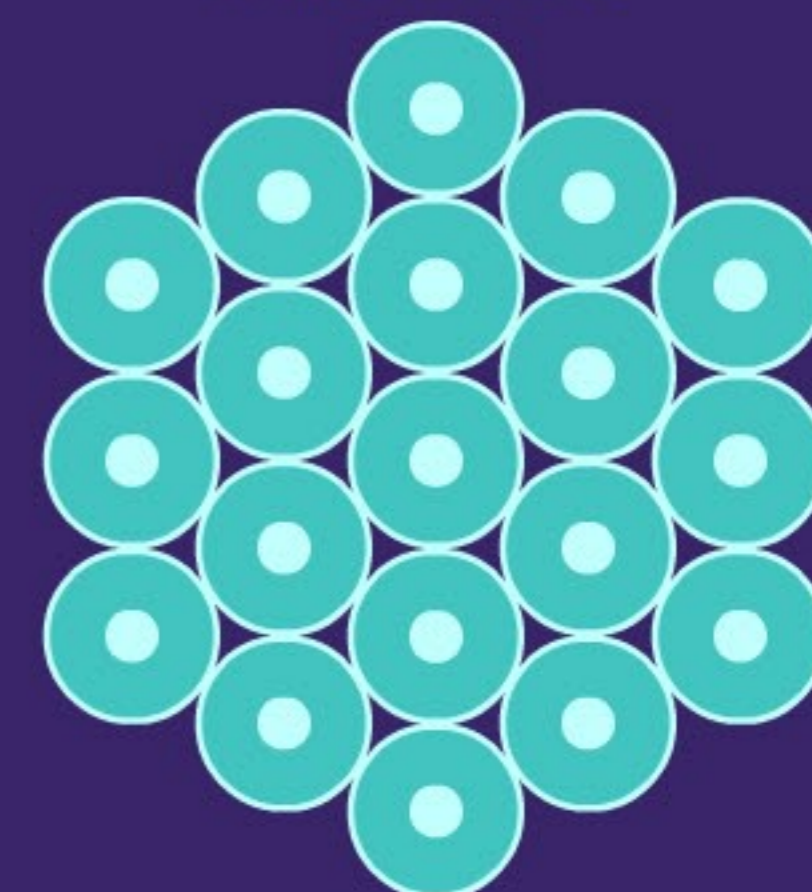
Simple Milstein Hexagon Module



Triangle Milstein Module



Hexagon Milstein Module



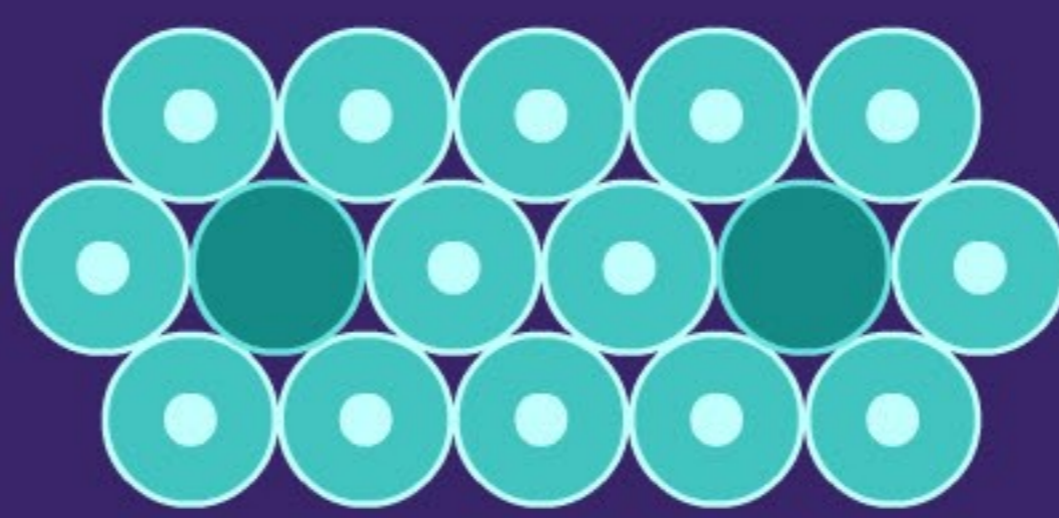
● Upright Ecobrick

● Upside-down Ecobrick

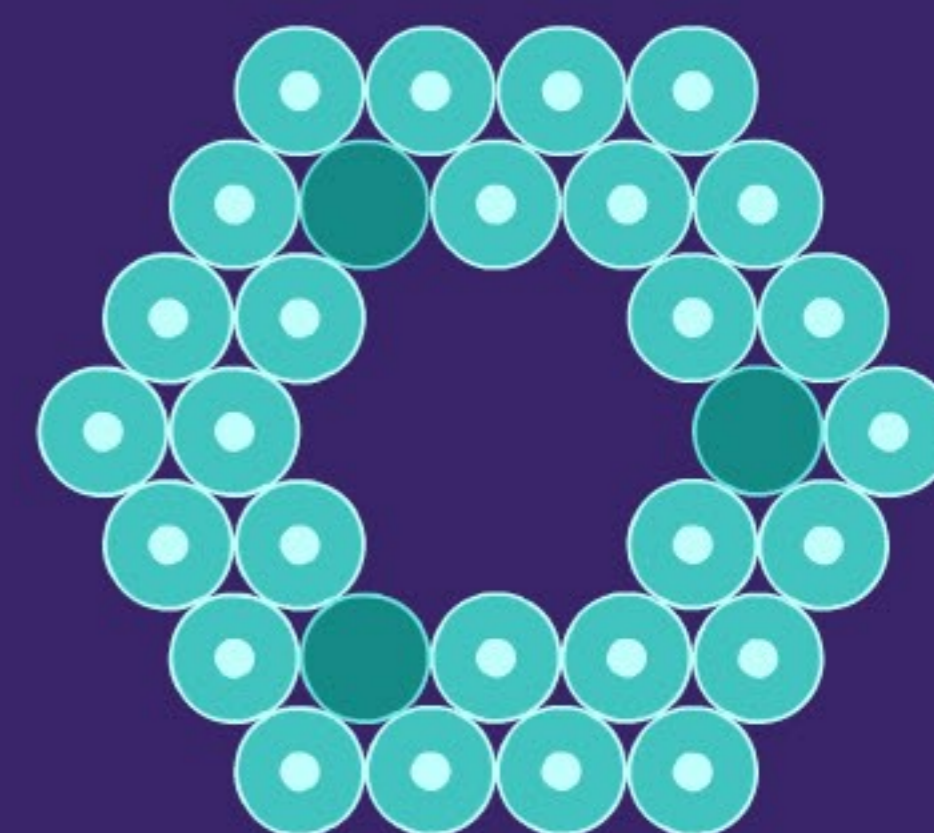
Dieleman Single Module



Dieleman Lego Module



Dieleman Tower Module



You can use generic silicone and/or repurposed rubber tubing to stick your Ecobricks together to make your modules to build with. We recommend looking online to see all the ways that you can build with Ecobricks and to get design inspiration and ideas. Perhaps the best use of Ecobricks is building community green spaces – You and your community can build spaces that enrich the local environment using local soil and Ecobricks!

And of course, you can be creative with your designs – use one colour on the bottom of every bottle to create patterns, make big or small creations, come up with your own ideas and have fun with it!

See below some examples of things you can do with your Ecobrick...

Garden furniture for your family and friends!



A stool or chair for the house!



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A nice coffee table or couch!

Use to play garden games!



Floating table or platform with a nice pattern for a swimming pool, or as a stage or mat!

Use to build things/as a stand!



Some people use them to build houses or sheds!



You can build a large or small sign to put anywhere you think it'd be nice!

... Or anything else that you can think of! Be sure to send pictures to us at blathineogras.ie to show us your creations and designs!

Some links about EcoBricks:

www.ecobricks.org

www.mrfcj.org

www.reuzi.ie

www.sealrescueireland.org