

Plastics the material for the 21st century

Since the first plastic was invented a century or more ago, plastics have revolutionised the way we live. Whether we're communicating, travelling, playing, caring for each other's health or protecting the environment, there's no sphere of human activity that hasn't been significantly advanced by the use of this remarkable material. And today, scientists and technologists are continuously working at the forefront of knowledge, in fields as diverse as space exploration, nanotechnology and medicine, to find new ways plastics can benefit people. Their research means that many solutions, for most of us as yet unimaginable, will soon enter our everyday lives - all thanks to amazing plastics. No wonder plastics are set to be the material for the 21st century.



PlasticsEurope

Avenue E. Van Nieuwenhuysse 4/3
B-1160 Brussels · Belgium

Phone +32 (0)2 675 32 97
Fax +32 (0)2 675 39 35

info@plasticseurope.org
www.plasticseurope.org

EuPC

Avenue de Cortenbergh 66/4
B-1000 Brussels · Belgium

Phone +32 (0)2 732 41 24
Fax +32 (0)2 732 42 18

info@eupc.org
www.plasticsconverters.eu

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Plastics
The Material for the 21st Century



Plastics are amazing

Plastics play a vital part in our lives: at home, at work, in schools and hospitals. We play with them, we travel with them, we wear them. And sometimes, if parts of our body don't work, doctors can even replace them with new ones - made of plastic. Plastics keep us safe, they make life more comfortable and fun, and they're surprisingly good for the environment. They come in many different forms: harder than steel, softer than silk, any colour or shape... It's why designers and inventors love them. Plastics are amazing. We often take them for granted, but life wouldn't be the same without them.

Plastics - material of the possible

Plastics, says Italian architect Cecilia Cecchini, are “the material of the possible”. Thanks to their **many special characteristics**, they can make designers' dreams come true. Plastic is not an “I would like to but I can't” material: it has **its own identity and personality** - often controversial but always strong.

Artists of the Italian Cracking Art movement see plastic as a natural, organic material: deriving from oil, it represents the synthesis of all life on the planet. Plastics are an **inexhaustible source of inspiration for artists and designers**, with plastic creations often becoming objects of desire. As a result, plastics feature prominently in many of the world's museums of modern art.



Plastics - material of the senses

No other materials can assume so **many shapes, weights, shades, colours, and textures**, inspiring all kinds of emotions. Plastics are cutting-edge in **fashion, interior design and art**. Even **packaging and marketing** have declared it their **material of choice**.

For decades, plastics have been making history, thanks to Italian designers like Alessandro Mendini, Joe Colombo, Ettore Sottsass and Paolo Lomazzi, while many other international designers, such as Philippe Stark and Tom Dixon, have, in their use of plastics, had a strong influence on succeeding generations of designers.



Plastics - light and lightness

Lightness is one of the main attributes of plastic. **Lighter furniture, structures and objects not only look stylish, but also contribute to sustainability.**

This is because lightweight materials take less energy to transport and install. Plastics can also be transparent or translucent, qualities that are not only fashionable but also help to conserve energy, as they make it possible to regulate heating and light intensity in buildings.

