

Keep Hydrated and Keep Those Water Bottles Clean

As the weather heats up, so does our need to stay hydrated. Experts suggest drinking at least eight 8-ounce glasses of water per day, and more if you're exercising. One of the least expensive, easiest and most environmentally responsible ways to get all that water is by using a refillable water bottle.

Reusable water bottles now come in both metal and safe plastic, not to mention a variety of shapes, sizes and designs. There are removable tops, sippy tops, straws and spritzers, but the one thing all water bottles have in common is that you need to keep them clean. Bacteria can build up in water bottles if they are left full, especially if you are using them for beverages other than water. For best results, use bottles for water only, especially if you will be traveling. Some beverages such as milk can spoil, and the high sugar content in juice and soda can draw bugs and other pesky critters to congregate on, in or around your drink.

Check the bottle label for cleaning recommendations. Some are dishwasher safe (but maybe only in the top rack). If your bottle needs to be washed by hand, follow these simple steps below to ensure that you have on-the-go safe drinking water all summer long.

Hand-wash all parts of the water bottle in warm water and dish detergent before using for the first time. Some factory residue could be left on a new bottle, even though it looks clean. Bottles may have also been sitting in warehouses, factories or stores for months, where they could have gotten dirty or been touched by dozens of people before you purchase them.

After each use, completely dismantle the water bottle and clean all parts thoroughly using warm water and dish detergent. If the bottle has a straw or spritzer, be sure to wash all those components, and then rinse thoroughly with clean water. Air-dry or use a clean towel.

So clean, refill and reuse those water bottles to stay hydrated and healthy all season long!