



Plastic Portrayal in Film and TV: The Begley-Cohen Test

Plastic is an epidemic. Film and TV have the power to model a path towards a plastic-free future. **Plastic Pollution Coalition** has created a simple test for on-screen entertainment.



Actor/environmental activist Ed Begley Jr. and Plastic Pollution Coalition co-founder Dianna Cohen.

How Does a Film or TV Show Pass the Test?

- 1 No single-use plastics appear on screen (i.e., the film/show is set in a time with no plastic, or plastics are replaced with refillable, reusable, or package-free options).
- 2 If a single-use plastic item appears on screen, it is portrayed or discussed as problematic.



Why It Matters

 <p>99% of plastic is made from fossil fuels.</p>	 <p>Plastic inflicts major injustices on BIPOC, rural and low-income communities.</p>	 <p>Plastic contaminates our Earth with waste and toxins.</p>	 <p>Every 30 seconds, one person dies of disease from plastic and waste.</p>	 <p>Plastic items injure and kill millions of wild animals every year.</p>
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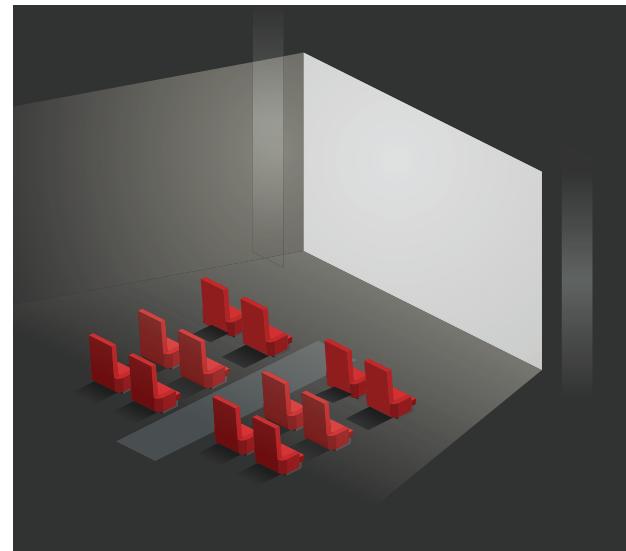
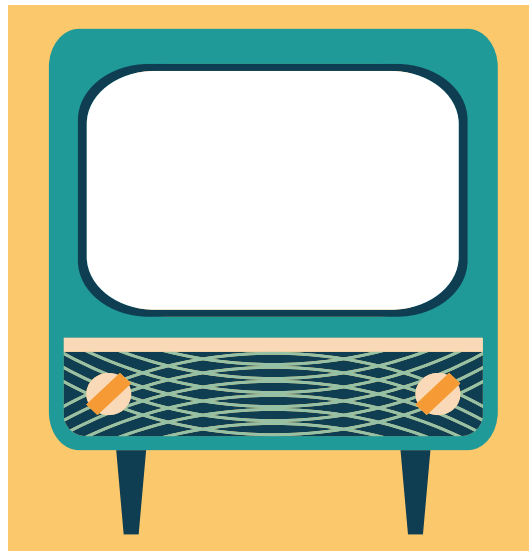
A 60-day shoot uses around 39,000 water bottles.

—Producers Guild of America / Green Report





Categories For Passing the Begley-Cohen Test



1

TIME PERIOD

Stories set in a time before the invention or mass production of plastic are a sure-fire way to feature plastic-free worlds on screen.



Bridgerton

2

SATIRE

Single-use plastics are portrayed within the story in an over-the-top or satirical way that highlights the absurdity and problematic nature of the single-use plastic items.



Crimes of the Future

David Cronenberg's "Crimes of the Future" doesn't discuss the few items of single-use plastic that appear as problematic until it's revealed that the overarching theme of the movie is "We're destroying the world with plastic, so what do we do with that?"
-Yahoo Entertainment

3

NO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Single-use plastics are present and available, but none are depicted on screen. Plastic items for long-term and multiple uses may still be depicted (furniture, appliances, computers, cell phones, medical equipment, toys).



Marry Me

Director Kat Coiro partnered with Habits of Waste campaign "Lights, Camera, Plastic?" in showing only reusable items and no single-use plastic on screen.

4

COMMENTARY

When single-use plastics appear on screen, the script and/or characters make a distinct effort to point out or discuss the problematic nature of their use or existence.



Life & Beth

Beth (drinking from a plastic water bottle): "It's like global warming. So sad, but what can you do?"
John: "Stop buying plastic bottles."

FLIP THE SCRIPT
ON PLASTICS!
plasticpollutioncoalition