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## Reusable shopping bags that don't hang around

Murdoch University research has revealed that a new type of sturdy woven paper bag, which is reusable for up to two years, may provide the solution to environmental problems caused by plastic and polypropylene green shopping bags.



Credit: RAUM International

The study, conducted by Dr Jaya Nair from the University's Department of Environmental Engineering, tested the breakdown rates of green bags against those of Australian-invented paper Bebak Bags in a composting system. Dr Nair found that after 30 days the Bebak Bags had almost completely disappeared, while green bags showed no sign of change.

Bebak Bags are made from paper sourced from sustainably harvested forests. The bags' strength and durability results from the manufacturing process, which involves twisting strips of paper and then weaving them together.

There has been a growing movement to ban plastic bags around Australia and replace them with biodegradable plastic bags, or the new generation of green bags – which have their own degradability limitations, according to Dr Nair's study.

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