

TUI Hotels & Resorts
Plastic Reduction Guidelines

Reduce the single-use

Eliminating unnecessary and problematic plastic

Strategies for success

For different hotel operations

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Dear Hotel Partner,

Tourism is a force for good. It is one of the world's largest industries and the main force for development and prosperity in many parts of the world. Together with our partners we strive to continue to positively contribute to local communities, reduce our environmental footprint and create experiences that are authentic and sustainable.

TUI's ambition is to actively shape a more sustainable future for tourism through the three building blocks of the Sustainability Agenda – People, Planet and Progress. We are working to reduce TUI's environmental footprint on the 'Planet' and drive-up environmental standards in our industry, including the commitment to become a circular business by 2050 at the latest.

Using less plastic, and recycling more, are important steps on this journey. Currently, only 9% of plastic waste is recycled globally each year. Almost a quarter of it - around 82 million tonnes – is mismanaged or littered and often ends up polluting the environment, rivers and oceans (*source: ourworldindata.org/plastic-pollution*).

Each hotel is uniquely positioned to make a positive difference in reducing plastic waste. In 2019, we published our first set of hotel plastic reduction guidelines, which focused on the single-use items that were most widely used at that time. The guidelines supported our ambitious goal to eliminate 250 million plastic items, which was achieved in close cooperation with valued partners who shared our vision and joined our efforts.

This updated guide builds on the great progress already made. It focuses on the high volume, high impact single-use plastic items that have proven more challenging to address within day-to-day operations, where guest expectations for safety and quality must always be the top priority. The guide is organized by operational area and provides practical solutions that are presented according to a simple hierarchy of options to remove, reuse or replace. There is also guidance on responsible disposal and on strategies for success. This guide includes a particular focus on promoting reusable solutions, rather than on simply switching from single-use plastic to an different single-use item. The broader challenge we need to address is how we can reduce all single-use items, not just plastic. This will help conserve resources and reduce waste in the long term.

We are delighted to be working with you on this important topic, with the aim of eliminating all unnecessary and problematic plastic wherever possible. Your ongoing commitment to sustainability is very much appreciated.



Peter Krueger
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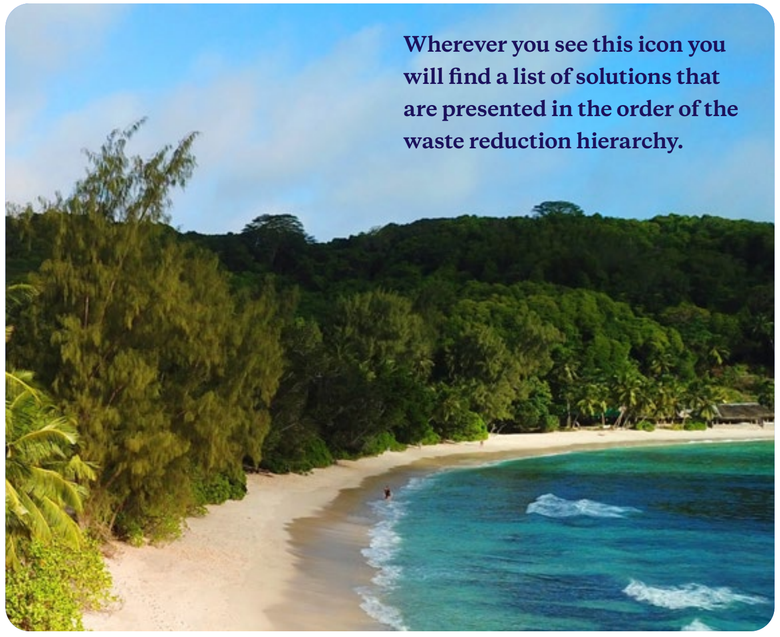


Kathrin Möllers
TUI Group Director
Sustainability & ESG

In the following pages, we will introduce the rationale behind the importance of tackling these high impact, hard to remove plastic products.

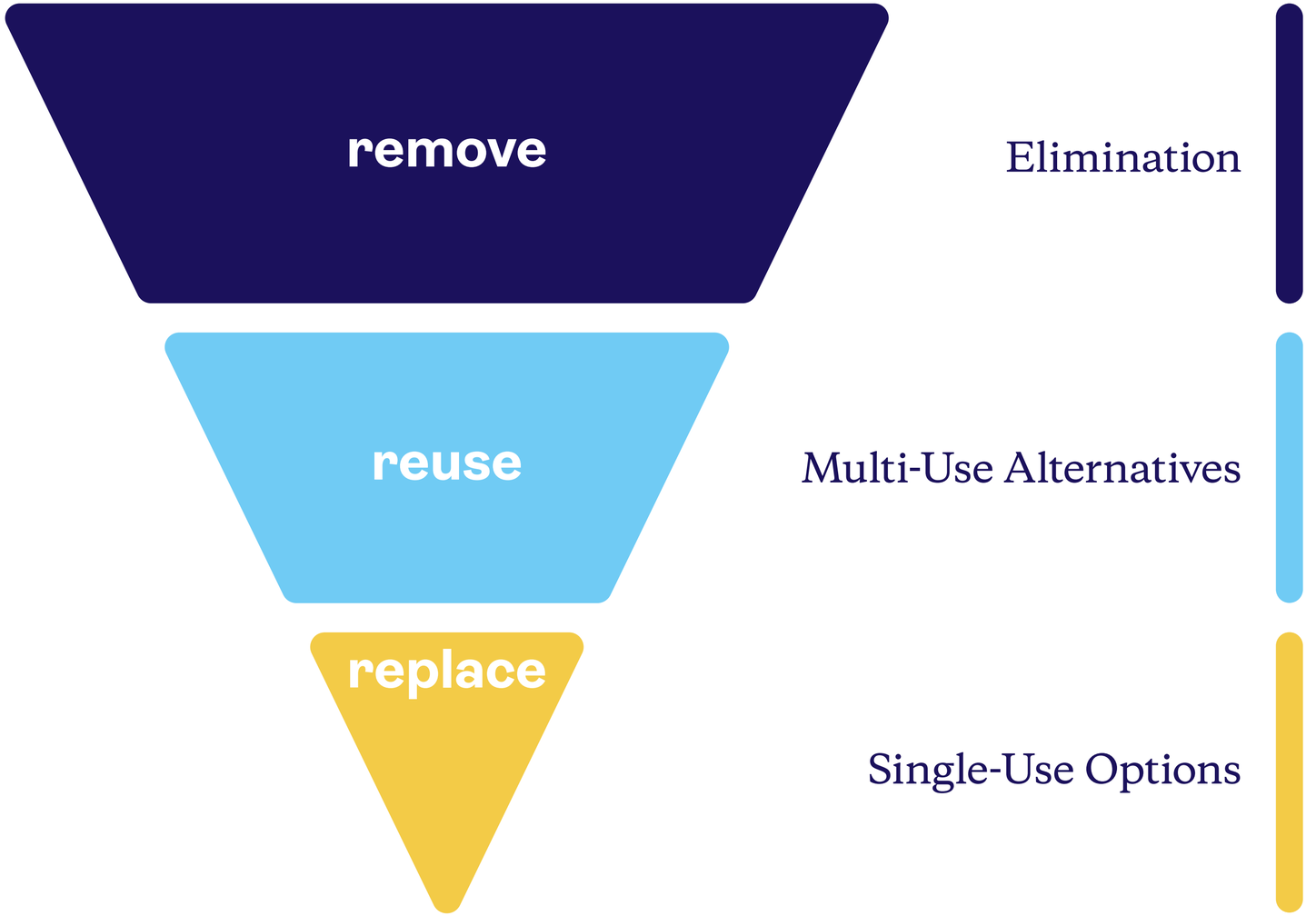
The operational guidance sections offer various suggestions for eliminating, reducing, or replacing these items, prioritized by the plastic waste reduction hierarchy showing solutions for elimination first, then multi-use alternatives, and finally single-use options.

It's important to remember that different solutions can be tailored to different areas; a one-size-fits-all approach is not necessary.



Wherever you see this icon you will find a list of solutions that are presented in the order of the waste reduction hierarchy.

Plastic waste reduction hierarchy



Unnecessary and Problematic plastic
High-level decision tree

remove

Remove the plastic product entirely

reuse replace

Not an option? Then replace the product by:
- A process (e.g. refill)
- A reusable product (e.g. reusable cups or cutlery)
- A naturally biodegradable material (e.g. bamboo or wood)
- A more highly recyclable material (e.g. metal, paper, cardboard or glass)

replace

Not an option? Then replace it by a 'better' plastic that:
- Is more highly recyclable or compostable
- Contains more recycled content
- Is less likely to be littered or end up in the natural environment
- Had no hazardous chemicals used during manufacturing or recycling

Can't remove or replace it? Then make sure the product is:
Responsibly disposed, recycled and/or composted, and never ends up in landfill, incineration, waste-to-energy, as litter, or in the natural environment.

Unnecessary?
Choose the best alternative to single-use plastic

Problematic?
Check how any remaining single-use plastic is made

Waste Management

High impact, hard to remove plastic products

1. Water bottles under 750ml
2. Bin liners
3. Takeaway containers & cutlery
4. Takeaway cups & lids
5. Single use tea, coffee, milk, sugar
6. Cling film
7. Garden waste bags
8. Breakfast condiments
9. Toothbrushes & toothpaste
10. Slippers & slipper packaging
11. All-Inclusive wristbands
12. Miniature toiletry bottles

High impact, hard to remove plastic products

Based on feedback from hotel partners, these are the single-use items most difficult to replace within daily operations.

1) Water bottles under 750ml
Water bottles under 750ml are widely used in hospitality settings for their convenience, but their extensive consumption contributes significantly to plastic pollution. These bottles are frequently collected in coastal clean-ups and are a major waste item.

2) Bin Liners
Bin liners are mainly used in guest rooms and bathrooms. These liners take centuries to decompose, contribute to landfill volume, create microplastics, and impact wildlife and natural landscapes. Based on feedback from hotel partners, these are the single-use items most difficult to replace within daily operations.

3) Takeaway containers & cutlery
Takeaway packaging, including containers and cutlery, is widely used in hotels for convenience but is discarded after brief use.

4) Takeaway cups & lids
Takeaway cups and lids are often available in dine-in outlets as well as to-go outlets, leading to unnecessary consumption. In today's fast-paced coffee culture, millions of single-use paper cups lined with plastic and plastic dome lids are used every year.

5) Tea, coffee, milk, sugar
Tea bags are often wrapped in plastic, foil, or paper pouches, with plastic and foil maintaining freshness longer. However, millions of these items are used annually, and plastic pouches often end up in landfills because they are not easily recyclable.

Tea and coffee services in guest rooms use single-use packaging for convenience and long shelf life, but coffee sachets and capsules pose recycling challenges. Annually, around 20 billion coffee capsules are produced, with less than 30% recycled, leading to significant waste and resource consumption.

Milk for guest room tea and coffee is often provided in single-use sticks or pots, which can be either refrigerated or stored at room temperature. Like coffee packaging, these milk containers are made from plastic and foil, leading to recycling challenges and significant resource consumption.

6) Clingfilm
Cling film is widely used for food storage due to its convenience and moisture retention, but it is single-use, leading to high disposal rates and recycling challenges. Its excessive use contributes significantly to plastic waste, comparable in weight to plastic water bottles.









7) Garden waste bags
Hotels frequently use plastic bags for garden waste, but lightweight bags are prone to tearing from twigs and branches, resulting in higher plastic use. As composting becomes more common, petroleum-based plastic bags must be avoided to prevent contaminating the compost.

8) Breakfast condiments
Many hotels use bulk dispensers for jams and spreads but still rely on single-use portions of butter and margarine for hygiene reasons, despite bulk alternatives being used for other condiments. These individual packs, like milk pots, have low recycling rates due to their small size and multi-layer materials.

9) Toothbrush & toothpaste sets
Although hotels are removing or offering some dry amenities only on request, toothbrush sets remain popular. However, many guests bring their own items, and low-quality toothbrushes are often discarded, leading to significant and avoidable waste.

10) Slippers & slipper packaging
Hotels often provide one-size-fits-all slippers made from inexpensive materials, which are discarded after each guest stay due to their poor durability and inability to be washed. This practice not only adds to ongoing costs but also generates significant non-recyclable waste, including the plastic packaging.

11) All-Inclusive Wristbands
All-inclusive wristbands aid in guest management and security, but their small size and non-recyclable materials often lead to them being disposed of in landfills or incinerated.

12) Miniature toiletry bottles
Mini toiletries bottles are facing bans and increasing scrutiny, with Europe set to prohibit them by 2030. Although they are used in some premium or spa areas, their design often makes them difficult to open, and their small size complicates recycling, leading to significant waste.

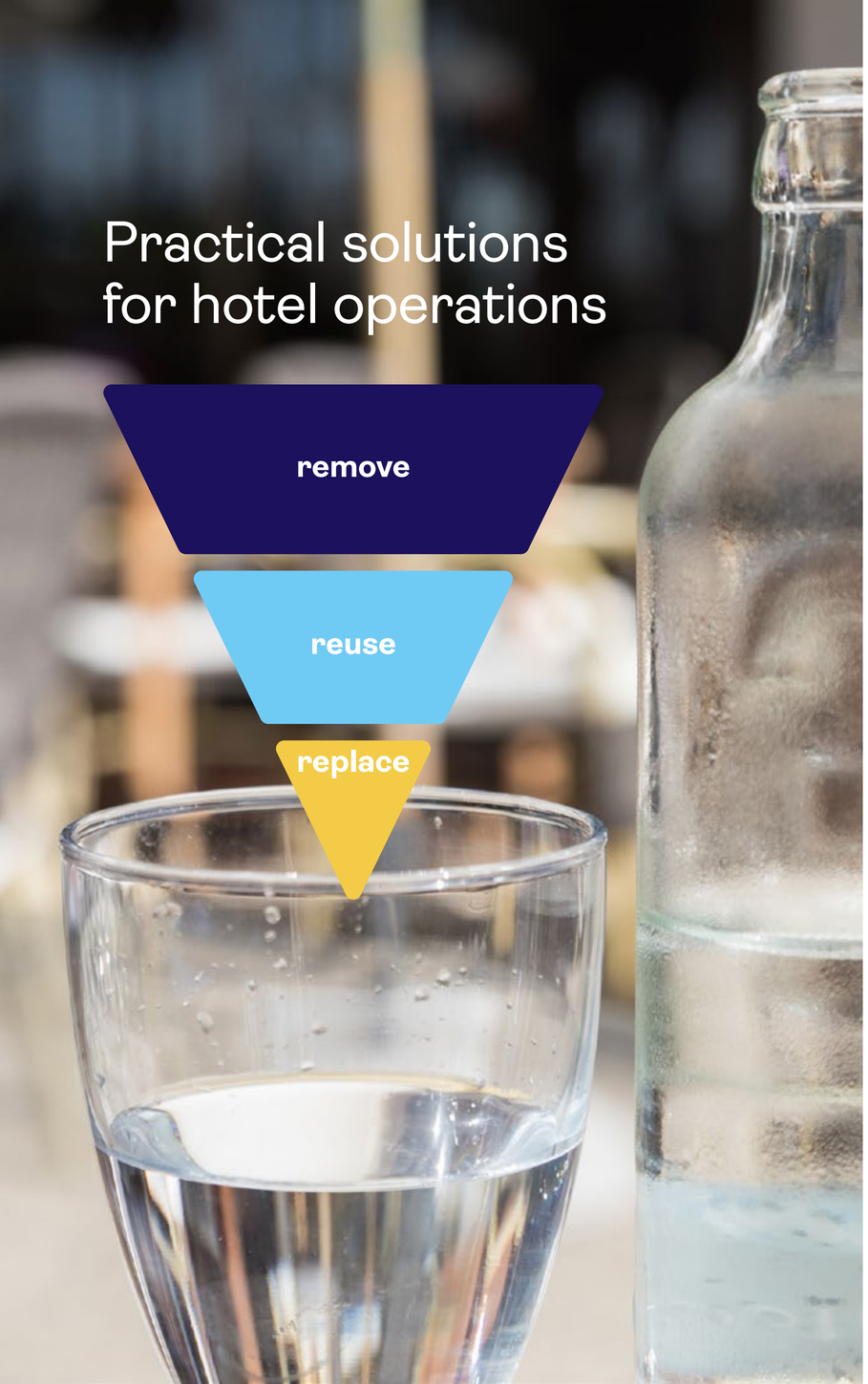
Practical solutions for hotel operations



Practical solutions
for hotel operations

Food and beverage

- Water bottles under 750ml
- Tea Bags
- Cling Film
- Breakfast Condiments
- Takeaway Items



Plastic water bottles under 750ml in F&B

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Tap water (where safe and pleasant to drink)
remove	On site water filtration (with or without osmosis) / bottling plant served in reusable bottles or glasses that are washed and reused onsite
reuse	Large bottles that are returnable to the supplier for reuse and refill
reuse	Glass bottles returned to the supplier for reuse
reuse	Incentivise guests to use own reusable cups and bottles
replace	Largest available domestic size bottles that are subsequently separated for recycling such as eight and five litre bottles
replace	Bottles of two litres or less with highest possible content of recycled material
replace	Other single-use packaging



Tea bags in F&B

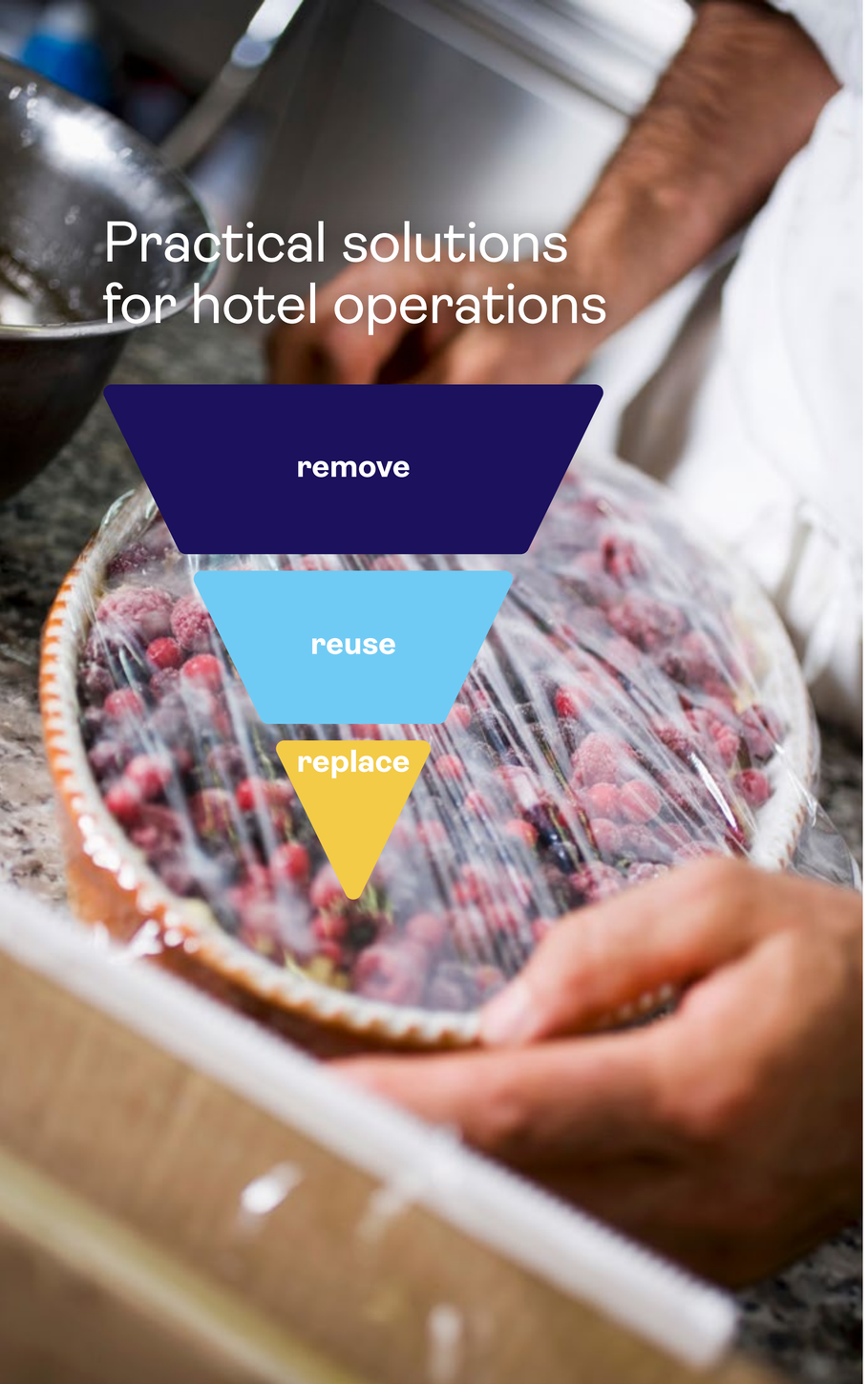
Alternatives hierarchy

remove Serve the most popular tea such as breakfast tea via a tea urn, using loose tea leaves

remove Offer additional tea flavours via a loose leaf tea selection in reusable metal tins or glass jars

replace Provide non-wrapped tea bags that are not made from, or sealed with, plastic materials. Keep them in metal tins or glass jars that can be tightly closed to maintain freshness

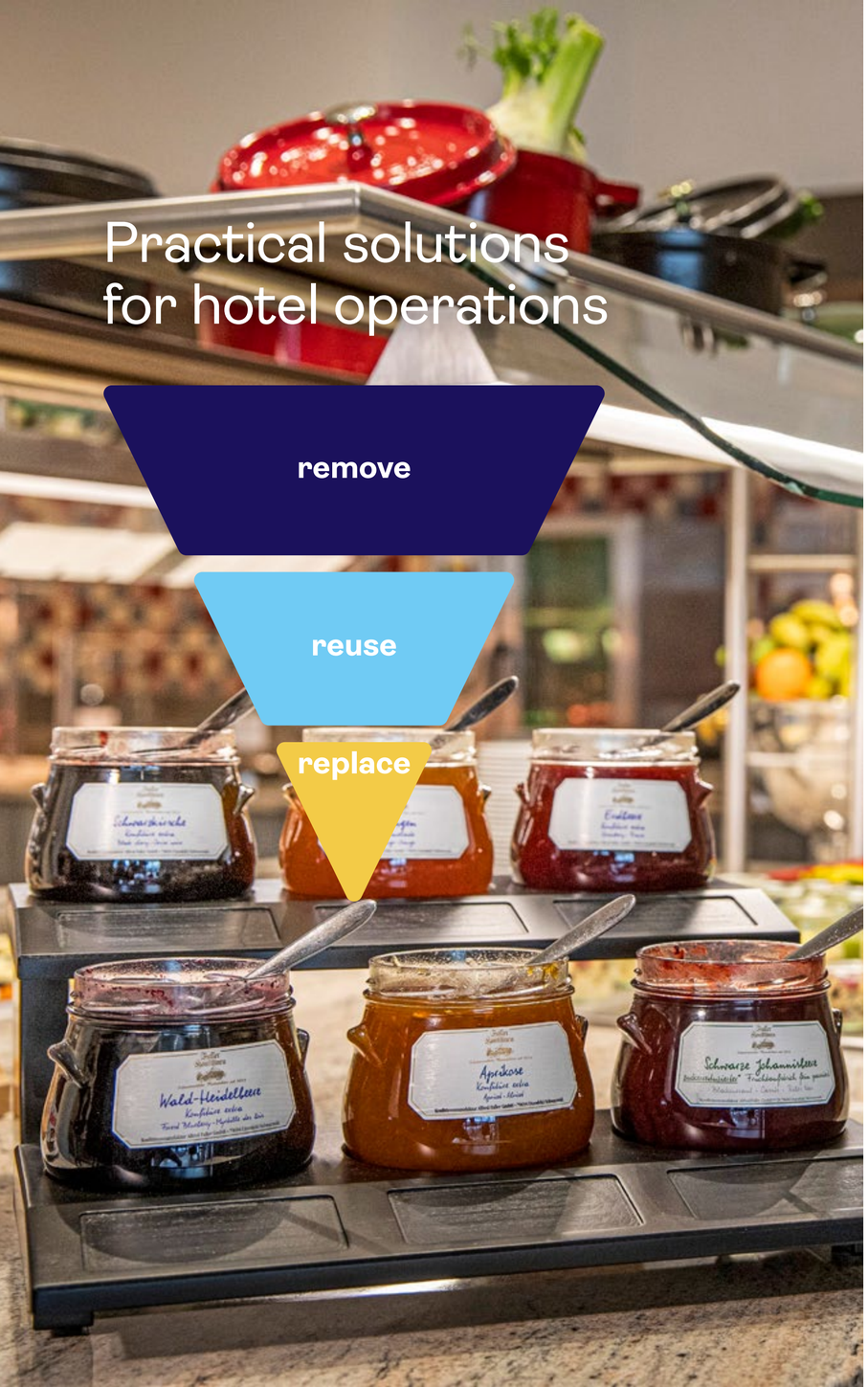
replace Provide tea bags that are not made from, or sealed with, plastic materials, but that are wrapped with a paper pouch



Cling film in F&B

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Avoidance of cling film
reuse	Reusable and washable alternatives
reuse	Influence your suppliers to reduce the volumes of cling film



Breakfast condiments in F&B

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Provide items in bulk serving containers / platters
remove	Un-wrapped, pre-cut portions from supplier
remove	Pre-portion items on site and serve via the buffet or directly to tables
remove	Butter spenders
replace	Other single-use packaging

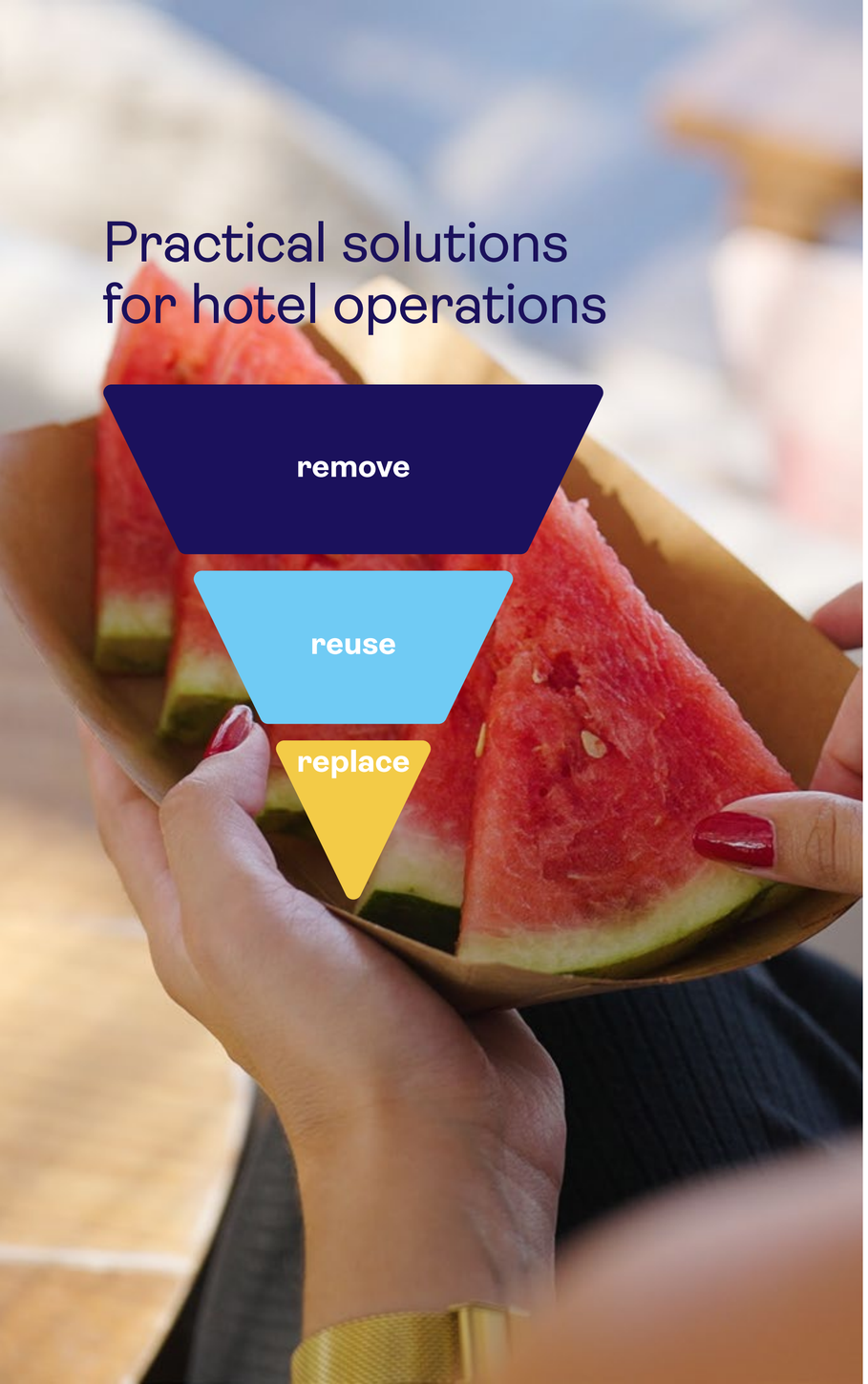


Takeaway containers & cutlery

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Incentivise dine-in/dine-out
reuse	Adapt equipment and processes to favour reusable alternatives
reuse	Reusable takeaway containers and cutlery
replace	Other single-use alternatives

Practical solutions for hotel operations



Takeaway cups and lids

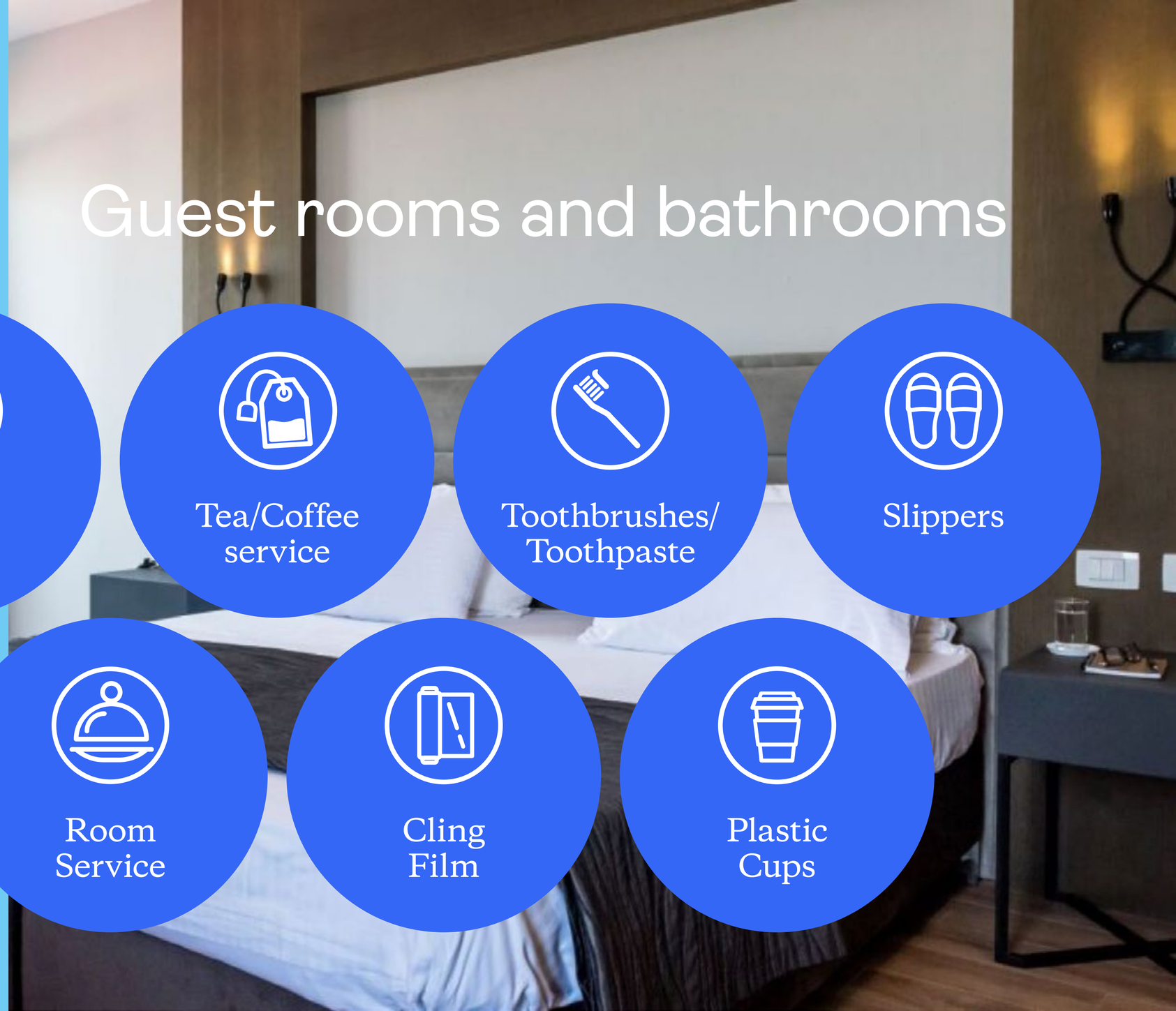
Alternatives hierarchy

reuse Reusable, non-breakable cups & lids for cold and hot drinks

replace Other single-use alternatives

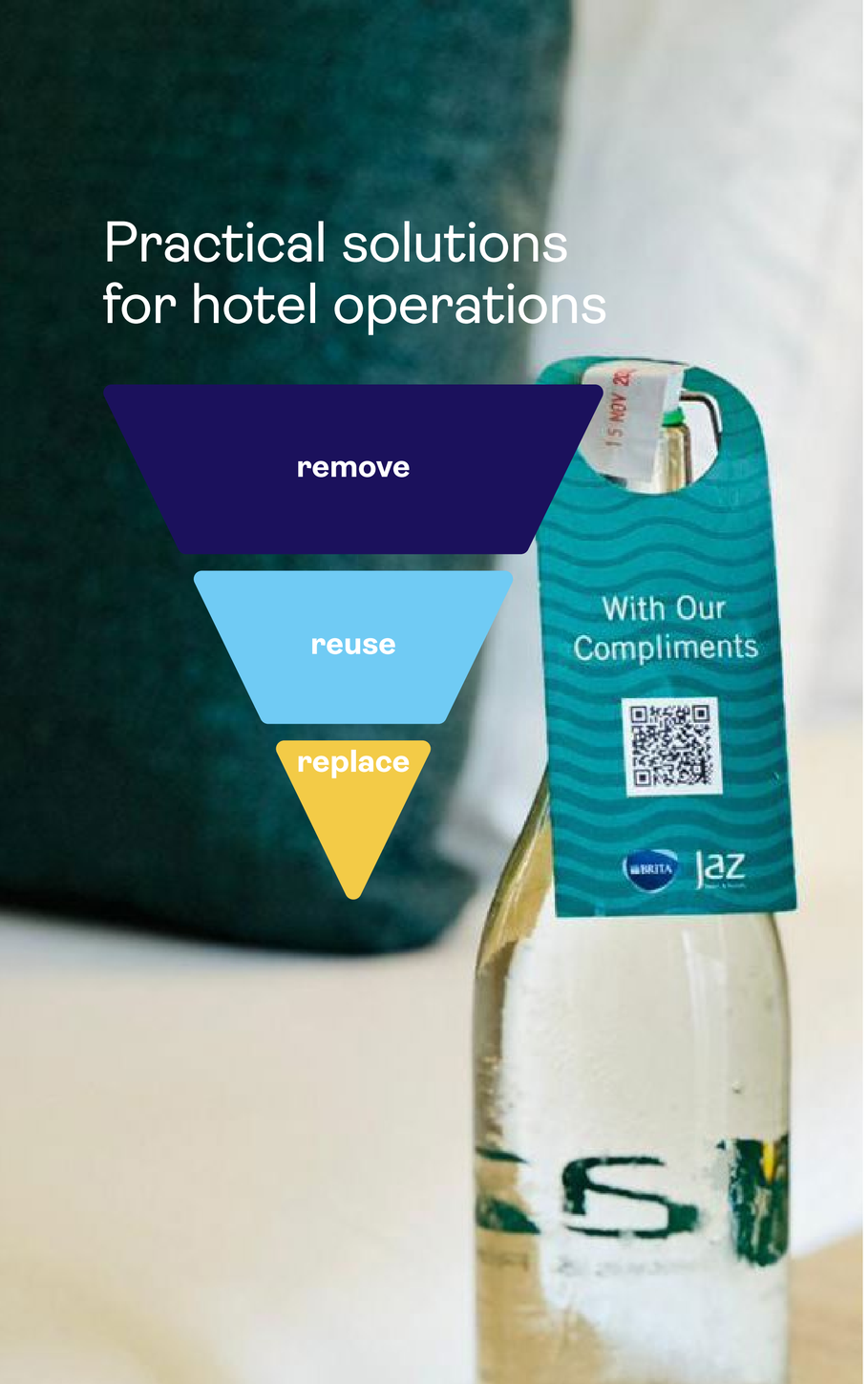
Practical solutions
for hotel operations

Guest rooms and bathrooms



- Water bottles
- Bin Liners
- Tea/Coffee service
- Toothbrushes/ Toothpaste
- Slippers
- Mini toiletry bottles
- Room Service
- Cling Film
- Plastic Cups

Practical solutions for hotel operations



Water bottles under 750ml in guest rooms

Alternatives hierarchy

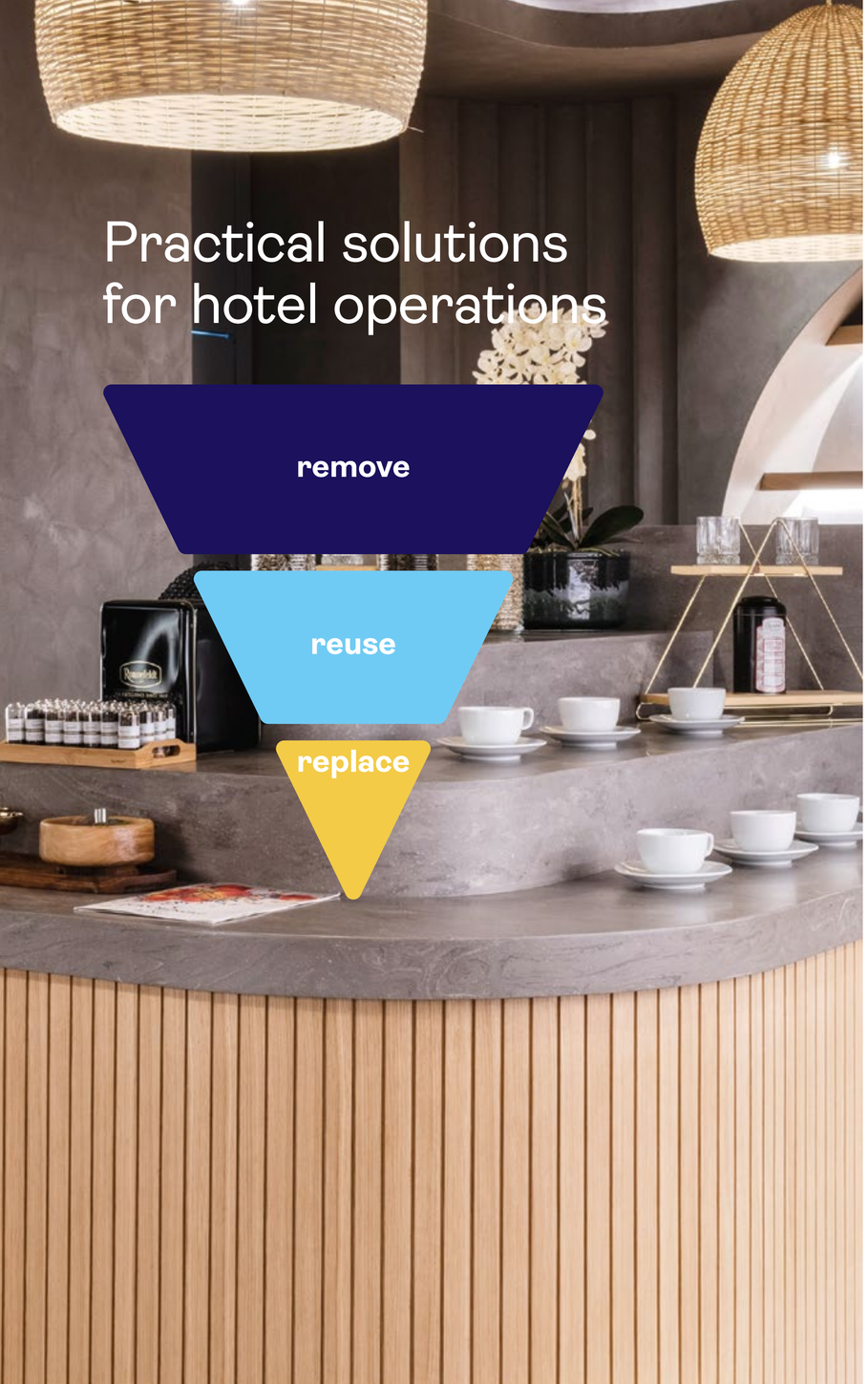
remove	If tap water is safe and pleasant to drink, inform guests about this and eliminate water bottles from guest rooms
remove	On site water filtration (with or without osmosis) or bottling plan with water served in reusable bottles or glasses that are washed and reused onsite
reuse	Install water dispensers in public areas, and on guest room corridors. Provide guests with reusable carafes or bottles to refill and take back to their room
reuse	Water filter jugs for hotels and apartments with kitchenettes
reuse	Replace with glass bottles that are returned to the supplier for reuse
replace	Replace with largest practical bottle size, and separate for recycling
replace	Single-use packaging made from other materials



Bin liners in guest rooms & bathrooms

Alternatives hierarchy

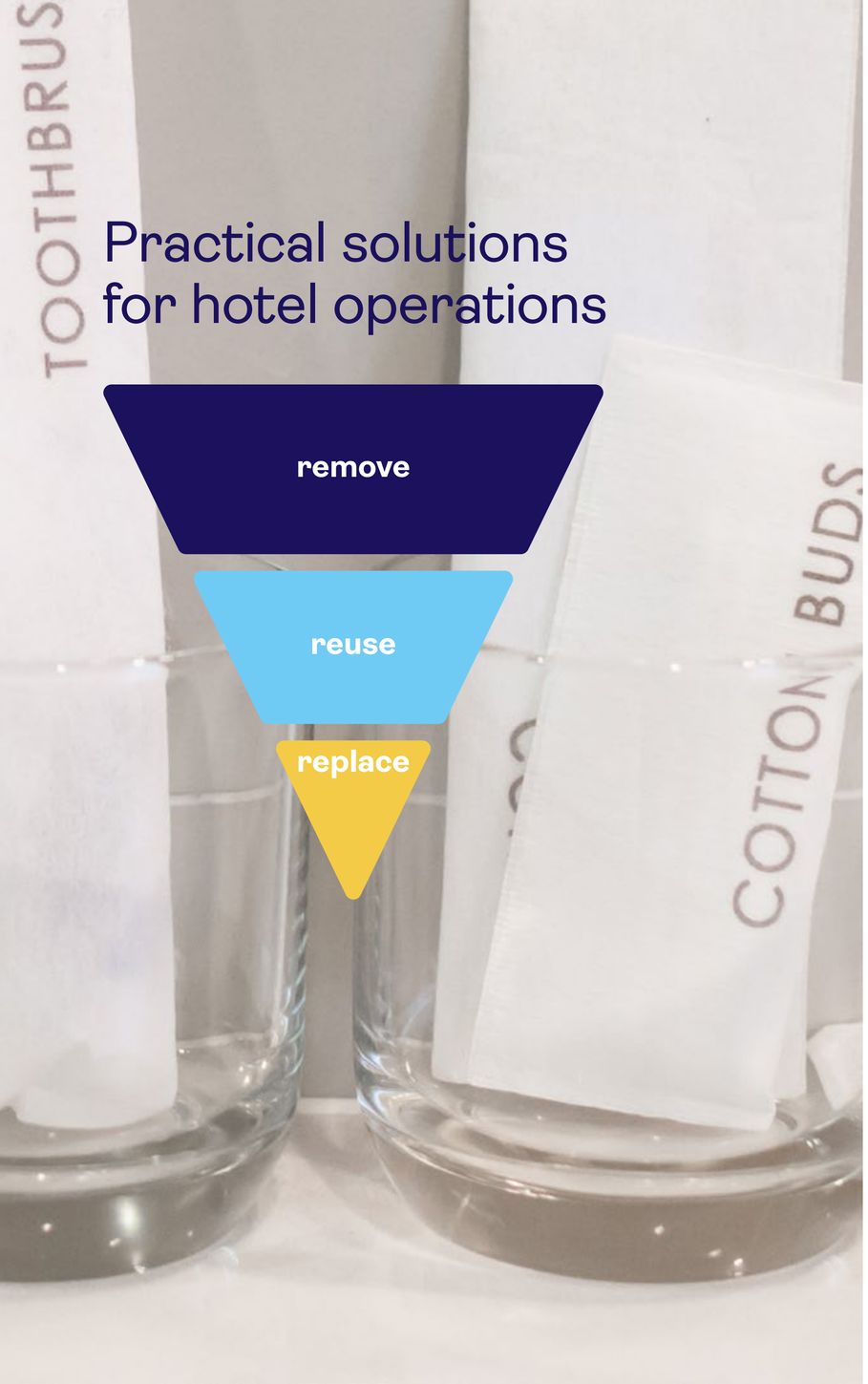
remove	Remove all bin liners completely
remove	Remove the liner in the bedroom and use appropriate size liner only
reuse	Implement reusable, washable bin liners
replace	Implement non-plastic alternatives



In-room tea/coffee service in guest rooms

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Create centralized tea/coffee hubs and remove individual items from guest rooms
reuse	Decant coffee and tea bags from larger bulk containers into smaller in-room containers
reuse	Decant UHT milks into smaller lidded jugs that can be stored in the mini-bar/fridge
replace	Other single-use alternatives



Practical solutions for hotel operations

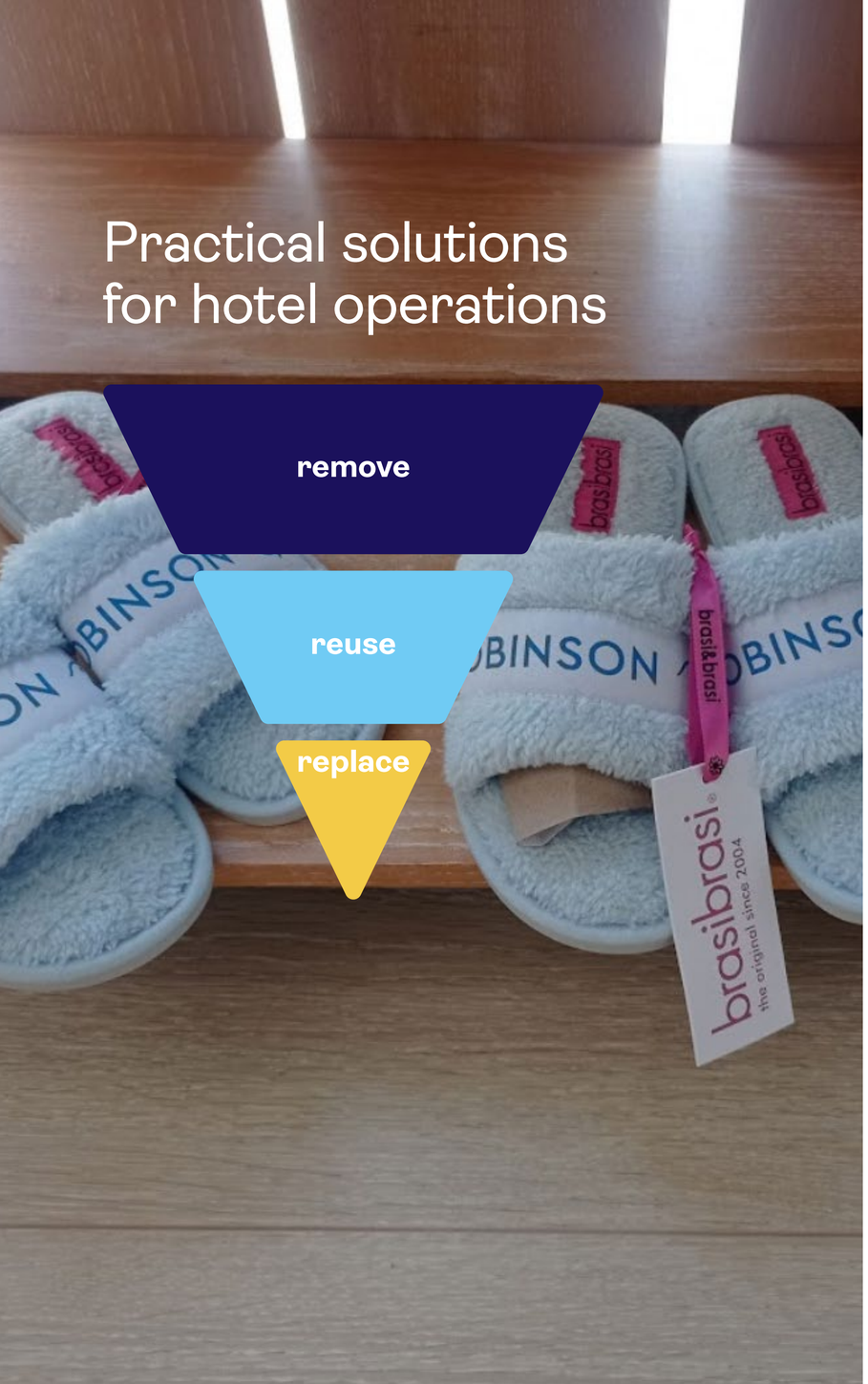
Toothbrushes / toothpaste in guest bathrooms

Alternatives hierarchy

remove Remove all toothbrush sets completely

replace Offer non-plastic toothbrush sets for sale or on request

Practical solutions for hotel operations



Slippers in guest rooms

Alternatives hierarchy

remove Remove all slippers completely

Offer slippers on request only based on the following options:

reuse Reusable, washable slippers

replace Slippers that are not packaged in plastic



Plastic cups/glasses in guest bathrooms

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Remove glasses completely
reuse	Provide reusable, (non-wrapped) glasses
reuse	Provide reusable glasses with reusable covers/coasters or single-use covers/coasters
replace	Other single-use alternatives



Mini toiletry bottles in guest bathrooms

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Remove all toiletries
reuse	Switch to toiletry dispensers refilled from larger containers, which are collected by the supplier for washing and reuse
reuse	Switch to toiletry dispensers refilled from larger containers which are separated for recycling
replace	Switch to large format toiletries which are separated for recycling
replace	Switch to other single-use alternatives



Room service items

Alternatives hierarchy

reuse Reusable crockery and cutlery options for room service and takeaway dining.

replace Non-plastic, single-use alternatives

Depending on the variety of food and beverage options offered, hotels may be able to provide some items in reusable formats while others may be more challenging. It doesn't have to be all or nothing; a mix of options is possible.

Adapting room service and takeaway menus can make implementing reusable options easier.

Practical solutions for hotel operations



Cling film (fruit baskets and other gifts)

Alternatives hierarchy

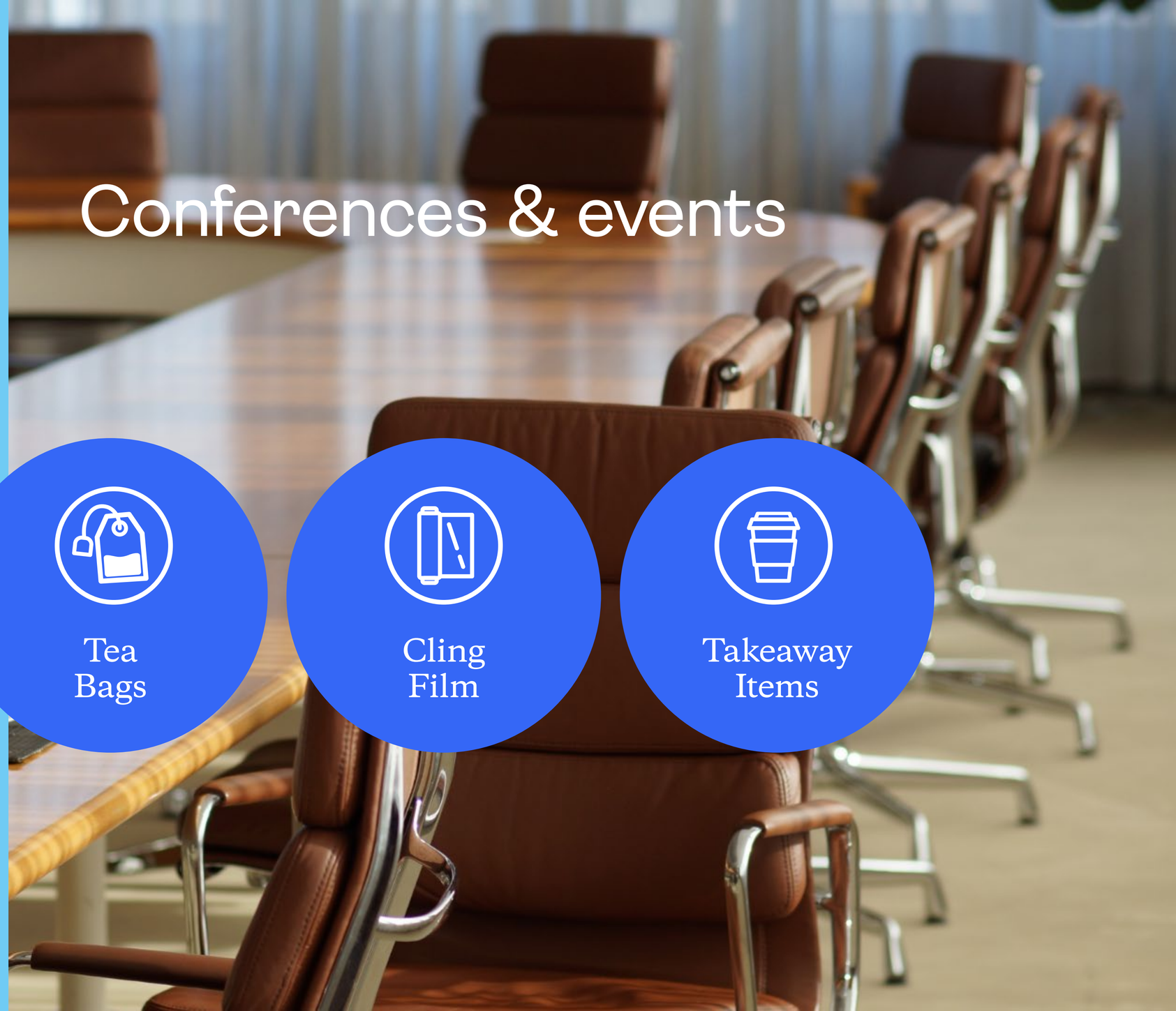
remove Provide fruit in its own skin for which no wrapping is necessary

remove Switch to non-food welcome gifts that don’t require wrapping

reuse Switch to reusable plate covers or other food display options

Practical solutions
for hotel operations

Conferences & events



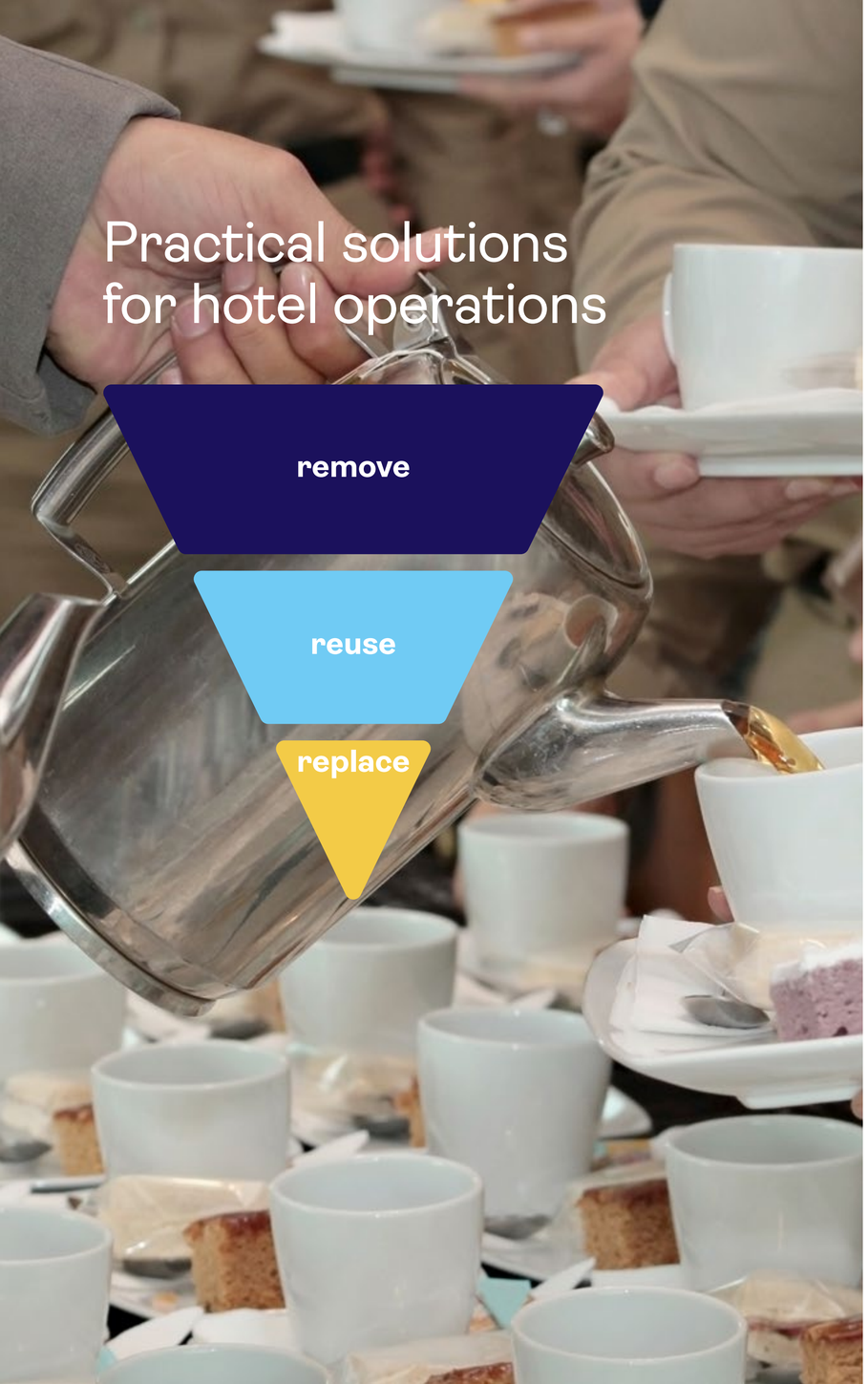
- Water bottles
- Tea Bags
- Cling Film
- Takeaway Items



Plastic water bottles under 750ml in conferences & events

Alternatives hierarchy

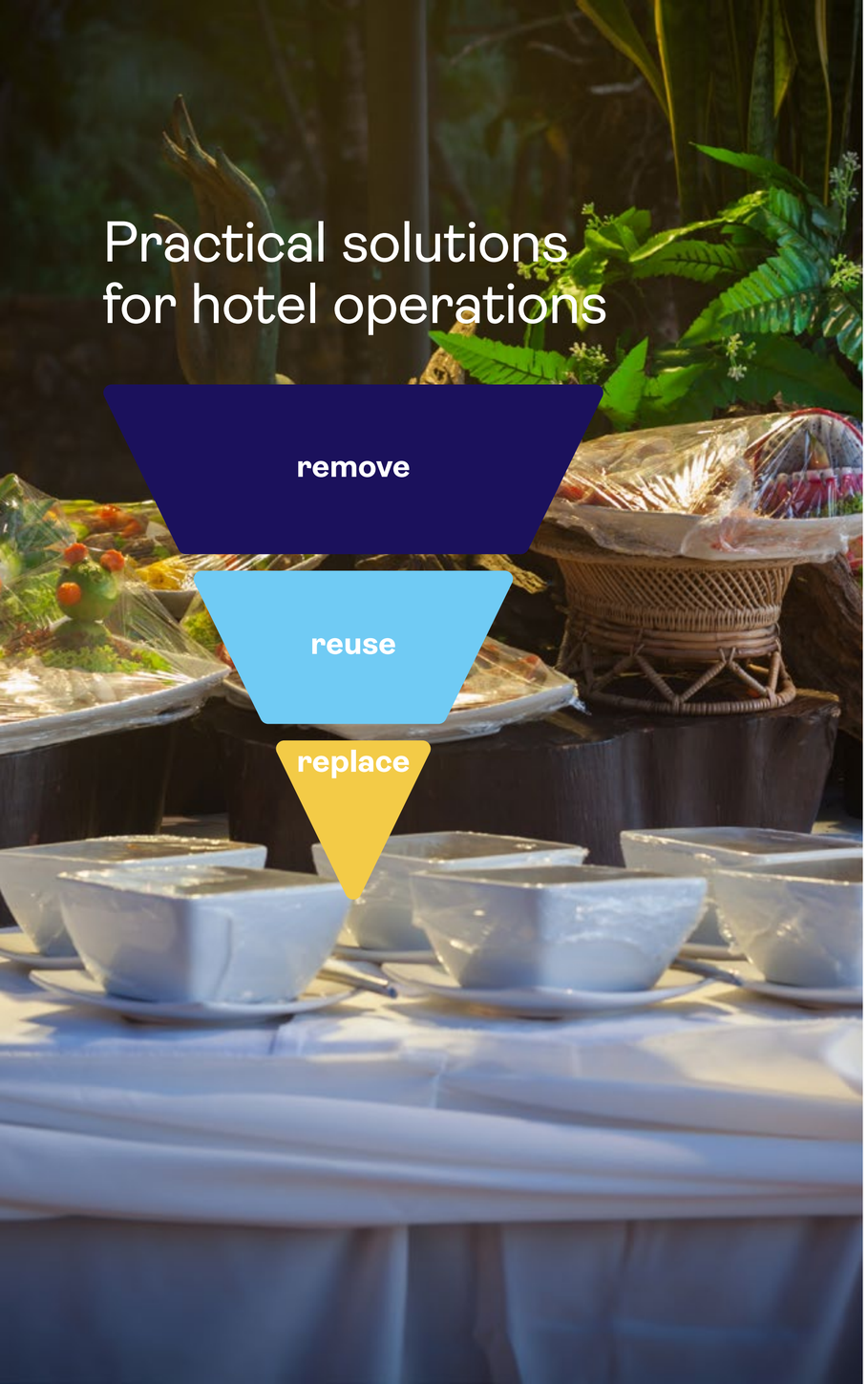
remove	Tap water (where safe and pleasant to drink)
remove	On site water filtration (with or without osmosis) or bottling plan with water served in reusable bottles or glasses that are washed and reused onsite
reuse	Large bottles that are returnable to the supplier for reuse and refill
reuse	Glass bottles returned to the supplier for reuse
reuse	Incentivise guests to use own reusable cups and bottles
replace	Largest available domestic size bottles that are subsequently separated for recycling such as eight and five litre bottles
replace	Bottles of two litres or less with highest possible content of recycled material
replace	Other single-use packaging



Tea in conferences and events

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Serve the most popular tea such as breakfast tea via a tea urn or large teapot, using loose tea leaves
remove	Offer additional tea flavours via a loose leaf tea selection in reusable metal tins or glass jars
replace	Provide non-wrapped tea bags that are not made from, or sealed with, plastic materials. Keep them in metal tins or glass jars that can be tightly closed to maintain freshness
replace	Provide tea bags that are not made from or sealed with plastic materials, but that are wrapped with a paper pouch



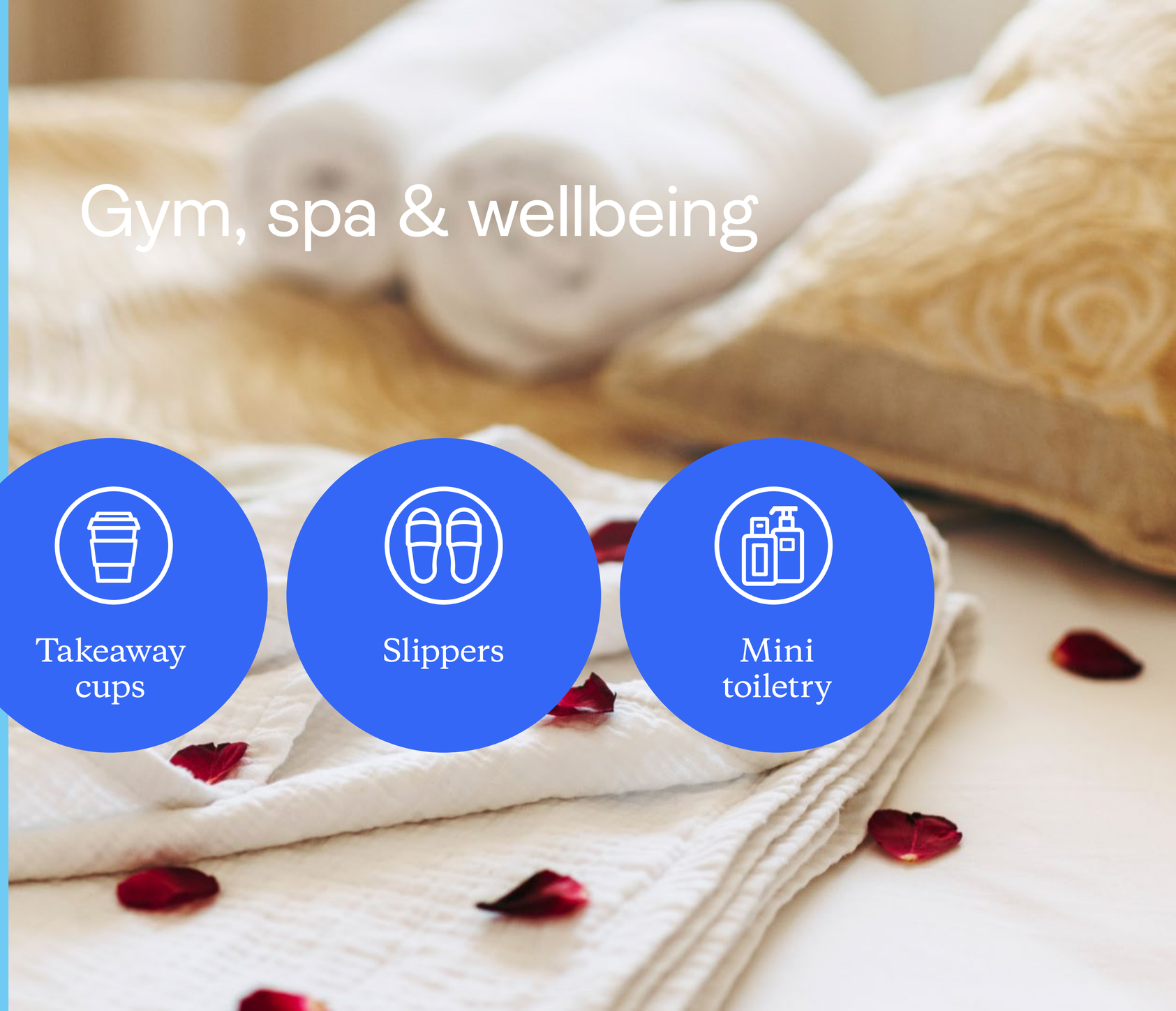
Cling film in conferences and events

Alternatives hierarchy

reuse	Reusable serving dishes with lids
reuse	Reusable containers for conference snacks
reuse	Transporting food items with reusable covers and lids
replace	Non-plastic single use alternatives

Practical solutions
for hotel operations

Gym, spa & wellbeing



- Water bottles
- Takeaway cups
- Slippers
- Mini toiletry



Water bottles under 750ml in gyms, spas & wellbeing

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Water dispensers with provision of reusable, non-breakable glasses or bottles
reuse	Large bottles that are returnable to the supplier for reuse and refill
replace	Bottles of two litres or less with highest possible content of recycled material
replace	Other single-use packaging

Practical solutions for hotel operations



Plastic cups in gyms, spas & wellbeing

Alternatives hierarchy

reuse Remove single-use cups and replace with reusable, non-breakable cups, glasses or bottles

replace Other single-use alternatives

Practical solutions
for hotel operations



Slippers in gyms, spas & wellbeing

Alternatives hierarchy

reuse Replace with reusable, washable alternatives

replace Other single-use alternatives



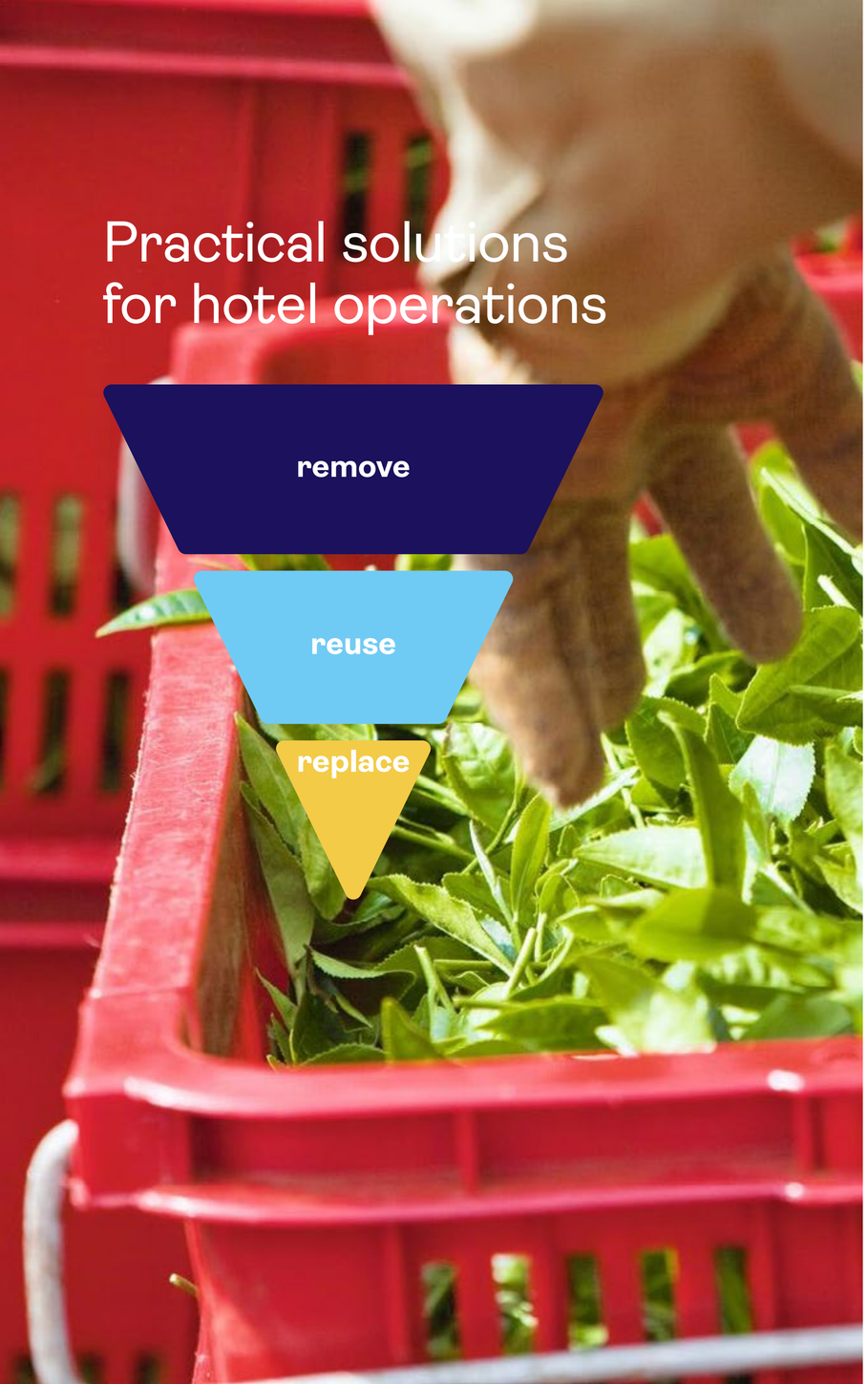
Mini toiletry bottles in gym, spa & wellbeing

reuse	Switch to toiletry dispensers refilled from larger containers, which are collected by the supplier for washing and reuse
reuse	Switch to toiletry dispensers refilled from larger containers which are separated for recycling
replace	Switch to large format toiletries which are separated for recycling
replace	Switch to other single-use alternatives

Practical solutions
for hotel operations

Gardening





Plastic garden waste bags

Alternatives hierarchy

reuse Reusable bags, bins and trolleys

It would be worth considering having a variety of options to accommodate the transportation of different weights of gardening waste. Use of other items on site such as laundry containers or cages and bins with wheels may also be a solution. If gardening is outsourced to independent contractors, encourage them to use reusable alternatives to plastic bags.

Practical solutions
for hotel operations

Reception & Lobby



Water bottles

All-inclusive wrist bands



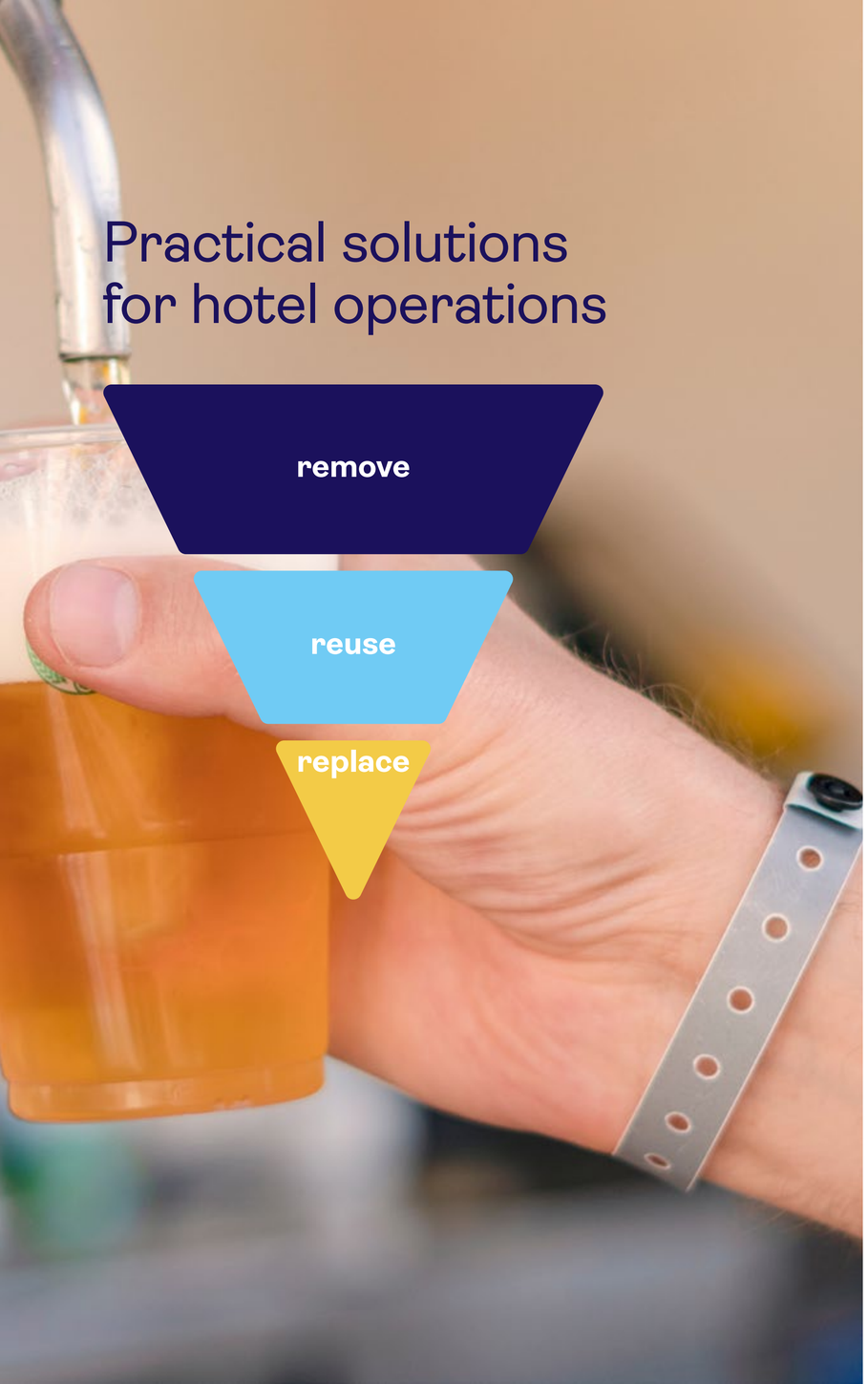
Practical solutions for hotel operations

Plastic water bottles under 750ml in reception areas

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	On site water filtration (with or without osmosis) or bottling plan with water served in reusable bottles or glasses that are washed and reused onsite
reuse	Large bottles that are returnable to the supplier for reuse and refill
reuse	Incentivise guests to use own reusable cups and bottles
replace	Largest available domestic size bottles that are subsequently separated for recycling such as eight and five litre bottles
replace	Bottles of two litres of less with highest possible content of recycled material
replace	Other single-use packaging

Practical solutions for hotel operations



All-inclusive wristbands

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Eliminate wristbands completely
remove	Implement a mobile app with a digital pass
replace	Switch to non-plastic bracelet alternatives
replace	Switch to wearable technology alternatives that are free from single-use plastic

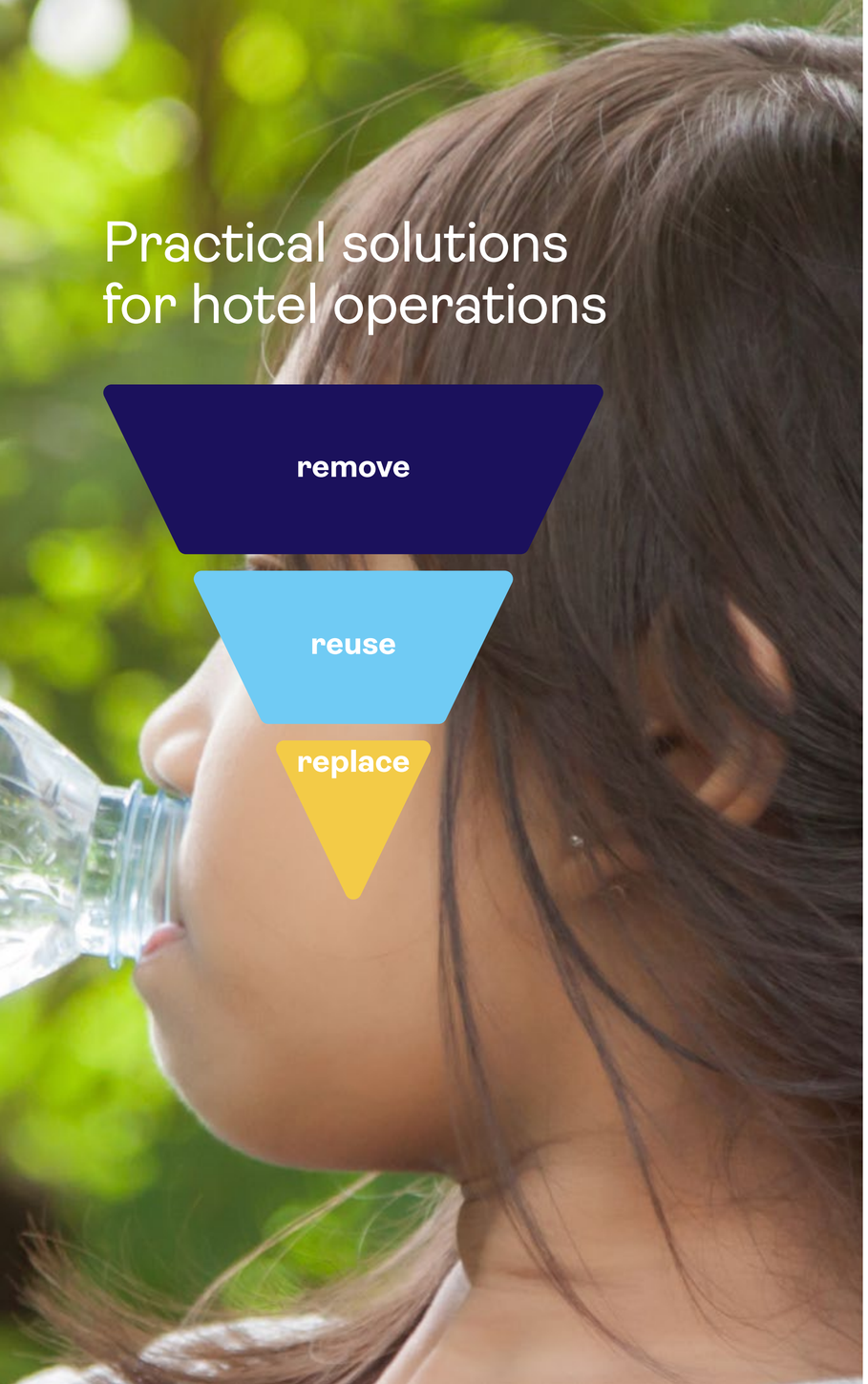
Practical solutions
for hotel operations

Children’s clubs



Water bottles

Takeaway cups



Plastic water bottles under 750ml in children's clubs

Alternatives hierarchy

remove	Water dispensers with provision of reusable non-breakable glasses or bottles
reuse	Large bottles that are returnable to the supplier for reuse and refill
replace	Bottles of two litres or less with highest possible content of recycled material
replace	Other single-use packaging



Plastic cups in children’s clubs

Alternatives hierarchy

reuse Remove single-use cups and replace with reusable, non-breakable cups, glasses or bottles

replace Other single-use alternatives

Alternatives for other single-use plastics



List of items	Description
Aprons	Replace with reusable, waterproof aprons for staff working in kitchen cleaning areas, and with reusable cotton aprons that can be laundered after each shift for other operational roles.
Bags and bin liners in operational areas	Providing housekeepers with reusable, washable liners for the collection of dry recyclable waste, which in turn can be deposited into larger liner-free bins. If food waste is being collected for composting or biogas production, bin liners can be avoided if proper hygienic bin cleaning procedures are implemented. Alternatively, use certified home-compostable liners for food waste. Avoid storing linens in bin liners or other plastic bags. If necessary, cover them using old bed linens instead.
Bags in retail outlets	Provide bags only on request, and consider charging for single-use ones. Offer reusable bags in guest rooms, either as a deposit-based option or a branded gift. Avoid paper bags for refrigerated items, as they quickly lose strength. If using compostable bags, ensure they're certified home compostable and communicate proper disposal instructions to guests.
Cleaning products	Minimise the number of plastic bottles consumed for cleaning products by choosing refillable solutions. Products like Stabilised Aqueous Ozone transform water into a powerful cleaning product without the toxic chemicals, automatic dosing equipment ensures that chemicals are diluted properly, and refilling bottles keeps plastic in the operation and out of the waste stream.
Conference materials	If name badges are not necessary, avoid lanyards altogether. If needed, provide reusable lanyards and ensure there is someone responsible for collecting them back in at the end of the event. If you have specific seating arrangements, consider pre-programmed electronic labels, similar to those used on buffets.
Decoration	Balloons are not made from plastic, but cause marine pollution and are harmful to marine life. Other items to avoid include glitter (which is essentially a microplastic) and lantern releases. Provide guests with allternative options instead, such as edible gifts or fresh flowers, or a special table for dinner. Use reusable decorations that can be brought out every year for special occasions such as Easter, Halloween, Christmas etc.
Door hangers	Replace plastic door hangers with sustainably sourced wooden alternatives, sliders, electronic indicators or other reusable materials that suit the decor and branding of the hotel.

List of items	Description
Giveaways	Make sure these are genuinely required rather than just providing out of habit. Avoid items which guests might take but are unlikely to wear, like synthetic t-shirts or caps. Items indvidually wrapped in plastic like pens, keyrings, and cups should also be avoided. Consider alternatives like spa, bar or retail vouchers, or edible treats such as arrival cookies in a paper bag. Always offer guests the choice to opt-out; not everyone wants a giveaway.
Gloves	Most single-use gloves are made from nitrile or latex, but there are some made from plastic. All single-use gloves can be avoided by implementing a handwashing system or by switching to reusable gloves.
Hair-nets	Single-use hairnets are made from synthetic materials which cannot be recycled. Replace with reusable, breathable hairnets that allow air to circulate and keep staff cool. For people with longer hair, offer reusable hair buns.
Hotel directory & communication materials	In-house TV channels, totems and apps are now much more popular ways of sharing information with guests, reducing the requirement for printing and laminating room directories. If printed versions are required, set printer settings to double sided printing, use sustainably certified, non-shiny paper and reusable binders.
Hygiene ribbons	A hygiene ribbon is simply an unnecessary communications tool as guests expect a clean bathroom. If you would like to communicate this in a different way without needing a single-use product, consider using the bath mat, as is common in a number of hotels.
Key cards	Wooden key cards are now widely available, but always ensure they are made from sustainably sourced wood. Wooden cards or wristbands with electronic chips can also serve a dual purpose of identifying board basis and providing room access. Key-free access through apps is slowly gaining popularity, though it may require a broader systems upgrade. Please also see the section on All-Inclusive wristbands for additional pros and cons.
Laundry bags	Replace with reusable bags made from natural materials, or with baskets made from recycled plastic bags. Work with dry cleaning suppliers to ensure that garments are not individually wrapped; use reusable garment rail covers instead. Change processes so that laundry bags must be requested at reception. Consider a guest operated laundry area with reusable baskets.
Packaging for sweets and snacks	Snack packaging is rarely recycled due to mixed materials, contamination, low value, limited facilities, and inconsistent consumer disposal. Avoid single-use waste by making your own snacks, or by purchasing in bulk containers and decanting into reusable dishes, sealable bags and tins.

List of items	Description
Pens	If writing stationary is necessary, switch to pencils or for a more innovative option choose seed pencils. Wooden or cardboard pens will still have a plastic ink chamber and may have plastic tips and clickers.
Plastic bags	Most likely to be used by kitchens and F&B to enable guests to carry any food and drinks offsite or to consume in their room. Consider paper bags, but be careful if offering refrigerated items, as paper bags can quickly lose strength. Alternatively, provide compostable bags or encourage guests to bring their own bags if they have one, as this will avoid single-use waste altogether.
Plastic coasters	Plastic-backed coasters are not as common now, but single-use paper coasters remain popular, contributing to disposable waste and are often not sorted for recycling. Reusable coasters come in a wide range of designs to suit various brand styles. Check if there are opportunities to work with local organisations that can create coasters using old wine corks, linens, wood, tiles or glass, which also puts other waste to good use.
Procurement and packaging	Prioritize bulk purchasing where possible, decanting products into smaller containers as needed. Similarly, opt for the largest packaging size. For pool chemicals, consider switching from containers to large refillable vats serviced by delivery trucks. If suppliers use returnable crates, ensure they're always returend and not diverted for recycling in error. Ask your suppliers for their support and ideas to reduce single-use plastic packaging.
Refreshing hand wipes	Almost all single-use wipes are made from synthetic materials which cannot be recycled. If flushed into waterways, they can clog sewers, causing issues for businesses, and reach the ocean, harming wildlife, littering beaches, and being blown around as litter. Replace with bowls of lemon water (one slice per bowl is enough) or with reusable hand towels that are either kept cold or hot, depending on the intended use.
Shoe-covers	Often used for visitors to kitchens and / or spa areas, single-use shoe covers can be replaced with reusable, washable shoe covers made from cotton, synthetic fibers or silicon.
Single packaged sugar, salt, pepper and sweeteners	Often these items are packaged in paper and not plastic, but this still creates single-use packaging waste. Buy condiments in bulk and decant into sugar pourers / salt and pepper sets. In humid climates, mixing dry rice grains into salt, sugar and pepper keeps them from sticking together, however this may require opaque serving sets so as the rice grains are not visible. Sugar cubes can be purchased in bulk and decanted as required.

List of items	Description
Stirrers	Most stirrers are unnecessary and can be eliminated completely. If they are necessary for adding loose sugar to a hot drink, use reusable spoons and ensure that there is a clear place for guests to deposit used spoons, such as a cutlery stand. If this is not feasible, use wooden stirrers. Where stirrers add value, for example to a cocktail, consider reusable stainless steel or glass stirrers.
Straws	Already prohibited in many countries, plastic straws can be replaced with reusable bamboo, stainless steel or glass. Collect straws in quickly after use, and soak prior to washing to ensure any organic elements are removed from within the straw cylinder. Single-use alternatives include paper, straw, pasta and sugar straws. If single-use, always offer on request only regardless of the material the straw is made from.
Towel, linen and uniform packaging	Whether laundry is done on site or externally, avoid plastic packaging by working with linen trolleys, and storing linen directly on shelves without packaging. To ensure clean linens stay clean, use trolleys with covers or large reusable laundry bags. Ensure that uniform items are not individually wrapped.
Yoghurt pots	Yoghurt pots are often not recycled due to leftover yoghurt remaining inside, leading staff to discard them instead of rinsing and recycling. Purchase yoghurts in larger containers and decant into reusable bowls or glasses. Offer a yoghurt bar where guests can add their own toppings.

Responsible Disposal



Effective waste management

Despite hotels having policies and procedures to reduce waste, they still have to handle the waste created from daily operations, supply chains, and guest activities.

Different kinds of waste need different kinds of processing facilities, which makes correct waste separation really important. If waste isn't sorted correctly, it can contaminate other waste streams, meaning even recyclable items might end up in landfills or being incinerated.

Getting people to recycle properly isn’t always easy, especially when staff are busy, or guests are from other countries with different recycling systems. For example, there’s no universal standard for recycling bin colours: in Belgium, blue bins are for plastics and light packaging, but in Spain, the Balearics and the Canary Islands, blue bins are for paper and cardboard.

For waste management to be effective, it’s important to make it as simple as possible for people to separate waste correctly, so it can be recovered for recycling.

However, it is important to remember that just because something is labelled as “recyclable”, this does not mean it will actually be “recycled” in practice.

Check with your waste collection company to see which plastics are recycled locally, in practice and at scale, rather than being exported for other countries to deal with.



Understanding which plastics are recyclable will also help you to make more informed purchasing decisions, so if you still need to purchase plastic products and packaging, you can choose those that are made from the materials that are most likely to be recycled in your destination.

Once you know this, ensure that any waste collection bins in staff and guest areas are adequately labelled using words and pictograms to help people to remember what should be deposited into each waste bin.

Top Tips to encourage separation

- Ensure there are plenty of recycling bins throughout the site, positioned so that both guests and staff can easily see and access them. The harder it is to find a bin, the less likely people are to separate waste properly.
- Thank people you see that are recycling well, it goes a long way to encourage positive behaviour
- Be absolutely clear on what can go into recycling bins, words and pictograms are useful
- Locate signage on the inside of the bin lid, so that even if the lid is open, it is clear what items can be placed in there
- Avoid “wish-cycling”. Wish-cycling is the habit of placing non-recyclable items in the recycling bin in the hope that they can be recycled. This contaminates the recycling stream and can result in all the waste, including recyclables, being sent to landfill or incineration.
- Items labelled with the number 7 are NOT recyclable. Most bio-based plastics are classified as number 7.

Image: Recycling bins in staff and guest areas, labelled with lists and pictograms and products that can be deposited into the waste bins, Robinson Cala Serena, Mallorca







Know your symbols



The “chasing arrows” symbol means that products or packaging are recyclable in theory. Whether or not they are recycled in practice depends on the waste infrastructure in your destination as described on the previous page.



A green dot with an arrow in the centre does NOT indicate recyclability. This symbol is used on packaging to demonstrate that the manufacturer pays an economic contribution to the recuperation and recycling of packaging in Europe.



A chasing arrows symbol with a number in the triangle's center does NOT indicate recyclability, it indicates the type of plastic that a product is made from. There are 7 different types of plastic and not all of them are easy to recycle.



Strategies for success



The Mindset for Change

Hotels that have successfully eliminated or minimized several types of single-use plastics can still find certain items difficult to phase out or replace.

This presents an opportunity to rethink processes and engage staff with a shift towards more solutions focussed mindsets.

On the following page you will find additional suggestions to help overcome common challenges.

Problem Mindset	Solution Mindset
1. We can't do that because...	1. What needs to change to make that happen?
2. We've always done it that way...	2. How can we do this differently?
3. People will complain...	3. We tried it, people still complained. We communicated the change better and then people loved it!
4. It's too expensive...	4. How can we budget for this?
5. There are no suppliers...	5. Which of our current suppliers could help us find solution?
6. Brand standards say...	6. Which brand standards need to change?



Common Success Strategies

The following 4 strategies are commonly used together by hotels that are achieving success towards their plastic reduction targets.

1

Clear goals and commitment

Demonstrate unfailing commitment to change, have a clear vision for the future (e.g. to be single-use plastic free by 2026), and a clear plan to achieve it.

2

Revised Standards & Procedures

Implement new policies that prioritize plastic reduction, written standards and expectations for staff and suppliers.

3

Collaboration and relationships

Actively seek help, advice and support, build relationships with other businesses that share the same goals.

4

Set KPIs and monitor performance

Define KPIs and measure what has been reduced. Celebrate and share achievements, and identify areas for further improvement.

About the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative (GTPI)

The GTPI unites the tourism sector behind a common vision to address the root causes of plastic pollution. It enables businesses, governments and other stakeholders to take concerted action, leading by example in the shift towards a circularity in the use of plastics.

TUI is proud to support the GTPI as both a signatory and an Advisory Group member, endorsing the common vision and making plastic reduction commitments across hotel, cruise and airline operations.

Discover how to identify and implement reusable alternatives in hotels and tour operations with GTPI specialized training **here**

oneplanetnetwork.org

For the GTPI, these 3 approaches are key:

Remove and Reduce "problematic and unnecessary" plastic packaging and items
Removing and reducing problematic and unnecessary plastic from an operation minimizes waste, prevents pollution, and lowers reliance on non-renewable resources.

Introduce alternatives with a focus on reuse
Reuse and refill are slightly different in that they emphasize reducing waste by prioritizing the repeated use of the same products and packaging.

Improve recyclability and procure plastics with recycled content
By properly sorting recyclable materials, businesses can prevent pollution, minimize the amount of waste sent to landfills, and enhance the supply of materials available for recycling.

Global Tourism Plastics Initiative

About Travel Without Plastic

These plastic reduction guidelines have been produced with the support of Travel Without Plastic.

Travel Without Plastic understands that reducing single-use plastics should fit naturally into a hotel's operations, but also recognizes that this can be challenging in practice. To address this, they provide a thoughtful, integrated service that helps hotels minimize plastic waste while identifying cost savings and meaningful sustainability improvements. By working closely with hotel teams, they deliver practical, tailored solutions based on where plastic is used and why, helping hotels make informed decisions with both financial, environmental and reputational benefits.

Travel Without Plastic also provides ongoing support and training to help teams implement and sustain these changes. With a Certificate of Collaboration to recognize achievements, their service ensures that efforts toward waste reduction are measurable, credible, and impactful.

www.travelwithoutplastic.com

TRAVEL WITHOUT PLASTIC

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