



or metal containers. Plastics were too weak to withstand the pressure exerted by carbonation. Nathaniel Wyeth invented a way to stretch plastic fibers while they were being molded. This process made the plastic very strong. In 1973, Wyeth patented the first **plastic bottle that was carbonation-proof**.

### Did You Know?

Some plastic uses petroleum, which drains the earth's limited natural resources. The manufacture and disposal of plastic can be difficult and dangerous. Plastic doesn't easily break down, which is helpful for products one uses repeatedly. Plastic is lighter than natural materials, which means it requires less fuel to transport plastics than to move metals or wood. Plastic is a good wood substitute because it does not decay, but it is also a problem to the environment because it does not decay. Some plastics are made of materials or chemicals that harm humans, especially children. Recycling plastic is one solution to these problems; another is using reusable glass or metal containers.

### Exercise:

1. Where does rubber come from? What was its first use? \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. Name three things made of nylon. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. What are some of the benefits of plastics? \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. What are some of the drawbacks to making, using, and disposing of plastics? \_\_\_\_\_  
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