SETTING UP A WATER BOTTLE REFILL STATION

BOOMERANG ALLIANCE
Plastic Free Places

A water bottle refill station in your business **highlights your sustainability commitment** and supports a **culture of reuse** in your community. Here are some **options and key considerations** for establishing your station.

WATER JUG



- Minimal upfront cost
- Filtered or unfiltered tap water
- Suitable for counter service only
- Staff to prepare/refill multiple jugs
- Staff to prepare & refill ice
- May need space in existing fridge

PLUMBED TAP



- Needs connection by a plumber
- Variety of styles & prices available
- Suitable for counter & self-service
- Filtered, chilled or unfiltered
- Space/access considerations
- Could charge customers for refills
- Suitable for refilling reusable table water bottles

WATER CONTAINER



- Minimal upfront cost ($20-50) from homeware or hospitality suppliers
- Suitable for counter & self-service
- Filtered or unfiltered tap water, or branded water
- Staff to refill or prepare containers
- Staff to prepare & refill ice
- Space required on counter or table
- Considerations for staff/customer safety when refilling

FOUNTAIN WITH BOTTLE TAP



- Suitable for counter & self-service
- Higher upfront & ongoing maintenance costs, including refrigeration & filtration
- Connects to existing infrastructure
- Customer safety inherent in design
- Could charge customers for refills
- Suitable for refilling reusable table water bottles

WATER COOLER



- Upfront costs & space required
- Barrels are delivered by a branded water company & refilled, reused
- Usually a hire charge for stand (refundable) & costs per barrel
- Minimal staff upkeep needed
- Considerations for staff/customer safety when loading barrel
- Could charge customers for refills

ON TAP WATER SYSTEM



- Variety of branded systems available including Purezza, Verve Water & Zip Water - contact their Head Office for local supplier details
- Connects to existing infrastructure
- Monthly rental or outright purchase options, including maintenance
- Chilled, filtered, sparkling options
- Can charge customers for refills
- Often accompanied with branded reusable table water bottles

BENCH TOP WATER FILTER



- A range of options ($100 - $250) from hardware stores or online
- Doesn't require plumber installation
- Connects to existing tap
- Requires minimal bench space
- Ongoing filter replacement costs
- Suitable for refilling reusable table water bottles

LOCAL PLUMBING COMPANIES

Local plumbers and water filtration companies may offer options to suit your requirements & budget

Please note: we **don't benefit commercially or in-kind** from any brands or products we suggest.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUCCESS

BUDGET/COST

- The cheapest option is to **provide refills straight from your tap.** However, a refill station is more successful when it is attractive to use - this could mean a chilled container or jug at the very minimum.
- **Consider other costs**, such as staffing, time, resources, and ongoing maintenance.

ATTRACTIVENESS

- A refill station that is **attractive to use** is key to its ongoing success.
- Tap water can bring up negative perceptions on quality - informing customers about where your water comes from provides transparency to overcome barriers.
- A sign outlining the type of refills offered will suffice, whether the station is visible or not.
- You can also offer filtered tap water, chilling it and/or making it sparkling.



ACCESS & SAFETY

- Ensure your refill station is located in a **visible, safe and accessible location**, considering the needs of staff to maintain it and customer access and safety.
- Ensure refill stations are **secure and at an appropriate height** to support refills to minimise the risk of bumps and spills.

HYGEINE

- You may be concerned about maintaining hygiene around refill stations. A **'no touch' policy** between tap and the bottle could be adopted, or the station could be counter service only (i.e. staff controlled).
- Choosing **taps which easily support contactless refills** can assist.

COUNTER OR SELF-SERVICE

- The advantage of counter-service is that you **control and monitor access**, ensuring a high standard of hygiene and the ability to charge for refills. The downside is **staff time** to provide this.
- Self-service will require space with easy access, and hygiene may be less in your control.

PRICING STRUCTURES

- Many cafes already provide free table water for dine-in customers, but may sell single-use packaged water for takeaway.
- You can support free refills for your takeaway customers, and/or **sell reusable bottles** with free refills in store.
- Alternatively, you **could charge for all refills** at an affordable rate, whether BYO or bottles purchased in-store. This is more viable if you provide chilled, filtered or sparkling water.
- Counter service options make it easier to charge for refills.

SELLING REUSABLE BOTTLES

- There are **many options**, such as stainless steel, glass or plastic (though this is less preferred). Bottles **can be branded**. A few options offered at different price points is more attractive for purchase.
- A simple option is to purchase plain glass bottles from commercial hospitality or homeware stores for a few dollars and sell these at a reasonable price point, encouraging your customer to reuse.



ENCOURAGING REUSABLES

- Ensure to use **signage** to encourage your customers to utilise it - we have free signage to download.

