



## BCU Data Collection

Collecting cleanup data is the best way to increase our impacts and further engage our activists. By collecting data, Surfrider volunteers become citizen scientists and are contributing to plastic pollution research. We can use cleanup data to determine what items are most commonly ending up on our beaches and craft compelling legislation against single-use plastics. We can also use this data to show the effectiveness of bans and help pass more comprehensive plastic pollution policy.

[cleanups.surfrider.org](https://cleanups.surfrider.org)

All of our beach cleanup data lives on Surfrider's [Beach Cleanup Database](#). We can easily find top items across the years and look at details of specific cleanups to find even more information. To create an account, simply enter your information and select your Student Club from the drop down menu. If you don't see your club listed, email [cleanups@surfrider.org](mailto:cleanups@surfrider.org) for help. Check out these [database training documents](#) to learn how to navigate the database and input your cleanup data.

The database is set up to collect priority summary information as well as itemized data. At a minimum, you must collect:

- the date of your cleanup
- the location of your cleanup
- the number of people that participated
- the pounds of trash removed

The more data we can collect, the stronger our plastic campaigns will be and Surfrider can be a better resource for plastic pollution data!

### Data Collection Methods

#### The Data Card

The original way to collect cleanup data is via the [beach cleanup data card](#). You print out the card and bring it to the cleanup. Using tally marks, you can easily count what items you're collecting and fill out the card as you go. Some chapters will count and sort their items after the cleanup and record their itemized data then. The data card was designed to match the format of the database input form to make for easy data entry.

#### NOAA's Marine Debris Tracker App

In an effort to add additional resources to the BCU program and reduce paper usage, we are piloting the use of NOAA's MDT app. This app allows you to track items as you go and stores the information in their online database. You can download the app, use your Student Club login

information and start collecting data. This data must then be transferred over to Surfrider's database. The Student Club Manager will be handling this portion of data entry for you.