

Waste Management



Did you know that each year, every Australia contributes about one tonne of waste to landfill (source Environment Australia 2006). Australia is one of the highest producers of waste per capita in the world. Not a statistic to be proud of. ☹

Approximately 50% of landfill rubbish is food and garden waste, around 24% is paper! By making a few changes we can significantly reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. The following guidelines will help you to reduce your waste.

- Reduce** – only buy what you really need
- Reuse** – find a way to use items again if you can
- Recycle** – if it can't be re-used, recycle it
- Remove** – sending to landfill is the last resort



Reduce

This is the simplest and most cost effective action we can take, and it has the most potential for conserving resources and protecting the environment. Simply reducing what we buy and choosing items with little or no packaging makes a big difference to the amount of waste created. Remember that almost everything we purchase will eventually end up as 'waste' of some one kind. Ask yourself 'Do I really need this?'

Reuse

This is about re-using an item in its original form. The most common examples of this are giving old items to someone else or taking them to a charity store, reusing wrapping paper, re-using jars to store things in, re-using the unprinted side of paper for notes, and trading sites like freecycle (www.freecycle.org). Aim to reuse or give away items you no longer want before moving onto the recycle option.

Recycle

This is one of the most widely accepted forms of reducing waste generated by the community. It works by diverting material from the waste stream to sorting and reprocessing plants to make it into other products. Many items can be recycled, check with your local council what can go into your recycle bins. Generally you can recycle paper, cardboard, glass bottles and jars, aluminium and steel cans, foil, milk and juice cartons, some plastics (usually codes 1 to 3, sometimes codes 4 to 7).

Organic waste is one you can do yourself at home. Setting up a compost heap and or a worm farm will enable you to process most of your own organic waste yourself. Suitable waste includes vegetable and food scraps (not citrus), tea leaves and tea bags, coffee grounds, dead flowers, egg shells and old newspapers (wet).

In a compost heap you can also process garden waste. For information on compost heaps see www.cleanup.com.au/au/LivingGreener/composting.html

Just doing this can reduce the 'waste volume' in your bin by up to 50% or more! This is the best type of recycling as this waste becomes food for something else. Consider setting up your own organic recycling centre to create your own fertilizer and garden mulch. It reduces landfill, reduces methane gasses (from rotting food) and saves you money. Great learning for kids and your plants will love it!

Other recycling options are:

Plastic bags	Recycling bins found in most supermarkets including Coles and Safeway. These include specialty shopping bags and heavy weight plastic bags, but NOT bubble and newspaper wraps.
Corks	Cork and plastic corks can be recycled through the Girl Guides National Cork Recycling Program. Hampton Community Centre and Dan Murphy's also collect corks for recycling.
Mobile Phones	Any major mobile phone distributor, Officeworks or ANZ bank
Printer cartridges	Participating Australia Post, Officeworks, Harvey Norman, Dick Smith, Cartridge World, Tandy stores, and some eco-stores
Computers and printers	Byteback (a Sustainability Victoria program) will accept up to 10 items per visit. No charge.
Batteries	Harvey Norman, Michael's Camera store, some eco-stores and some council offices
Car batteries, Motor oil, Paint, Gas cylinders	Monash Waste Transfer and Recycling Station, Notting Hill. Also see www.detoxyourhome.com.au
Medical products	Any pharmacy
Polystyrene	Victorian Polystyrene Recycling in Footscray. Ph: 9687 2110. Charges may apply
Tyres	Planet Ark recyclers, Associated Second Hand Tyres
Mattresses	Melbourne Mattress Recycling (Frankston) and Dream-safe Recycling (Cheltenham)
Reading Glasses	The Lions Club and retailers OPSM, Laubman & Pank and Budget Eyewear send these items to developing countries.
Furniture, appliances and household goods	Some charity shops, Salvation Army or waste transfer stations if the item is broken.
White goods	Waste transfer stations will recycle components.
Building/Demolition Waste	Eco Demolitions provides a comprehensive recycling service. Visit www.ecodemolition.com.au for more information.

To find your local recycling point or provider see www.recyclingnearyou.com.au.

Remove

This is the last resort of disposal. All this goes to landfill sites. Try to minimise waste to landfill as much as possible.

Remember – simply by reducing what you buy and/or reducing the level of packaging will reduce your waste!

For any queries or additional information on this tip sheet please contact Green Moves Australia on (03) 9024 5515 or 1300 898 742

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