

Recycling in Brisbane

Brisbane City Council is committed to keeping Brisbane clean, green and sustainable. To do this we need your help to avoid and reduce creating household waste and increase recycling.

Recycling is easy and benefits our environment.

Recycling:

- ✓ reduces greenhouse gas emissions
- ✓ saves energy and water
- ✓ conserves non-renewable resources for future generations
- ✓ reduces reliance on landfills
- ✓ creates more job opportunities than landfill disposal
- ✓ makes caring for the environment easy.

In 2017-18 Council collected 90,000 tonnes of paper, cardboard, glass, plastic and metal from Brisbane households through the kerbside recycling service. These materials have now been recycled and remade into all sorts of new things including packaging items, parts for toys, bikes, cars and even trains.

Although this is a fantastic effort, we can still do better as we're still sending things that can be recycled to landfill every year.

Together, we'll get recycling sorted.

Supported by



FOR A BETTER WORLD

What are we throwing away?

This picture shows what the average Brisbane household puts in their rubbish bin each week, as identified in Council's waste characterisation survey.

Everything put in your household rubbish bin is sent to landfill.

As you can see:

More than **17%** of the bin contains items that could have been put in the household recycling bin.

About **50%** of the bin contains garden waste and/or kitchen scraps that could have been put in a compost bin or worm farm.



More than **67%** of the contents in your household rubbish bin could have been kept out of landfill.

You can help reduce what is sent to landfill by finding out more about what can be recycled, and by putting the right items in the right bin.

Rethink your rubbish



Recycling around your house



If you take a look around your house, you'll find recyclables in every room. The kitchen, laundry, bathroom and even the garage provide lots of recycling opportunities for the keen recycler.

Place items made from **paper, cardboard, firm plastic, metal (aluminium and steel)** and **glass** in your recycling bin at home.

What's the easiest way to tell if something is recyclable?

If you're unsure whether an item may be recycled, ask yourself: "What is it made from?" If the answer is paper, cardboard, firm plastic, metal (aluminium and steel), or glass you can be confident it can be recycled. Even if it does not have the recycling symbol it can still be put in your recycling bin at home.



In the bathroom

Recycle: toilet rolls, containers for shampoo, conditioner and body wash, hair gel tubs, aerosol cans including those used for air fresheners, deodorant and hair spray, glass bottles used for aftershave, perfume or vitamins and empty cleaning product bottles.





In the laundry

Recycle: washing detergent boxes and all plastic containers including those used for washing liquid, fabric softener, stain remover and cleaning products.

In the garage

Recycle: newspapers, boxes, empty aerosols and packaging materials, all plastic containers and paint tins (empty and dry).

Containers or tins from the garage still containing paint, oil or chemicals can be disposed of at Council resource recovery centres. See page 22 for details.



What can be put in your recycling bin?

Paper



Most types of paper can be recycled with the exception of a few items which are listed below.



Newspaper, junk mail, brochures, office paper, gift wrapping paper, used note books, packaging paper, glossy paper and magazines, envelopes (including window envelopes), phone books, greeting cards, coloured paper, paper bags and scrap paper.



Padded envelopes, photographs, thermal fax paper, wax-coated paper, tissues, toilet paper, baking paper and nappies.



Why can't we recycle tissues or nappies?

Not only is it unhygienic for items containing bodily fluids to be processed alongside other recyclables, the paper fibres in these items are too short to recycle making it too difficult to recover any worthwhile material.



Cardboard



Cardboard boxes, milk/juice cartons (e.g. long-life milk and fruit juice cartons/boxes), egg cartons, toy boxes, pizza and cereal boxes, detergent boxes, tissue boxes and cardboard coffee cups.



Wax-coated cardboard boxes e.g. fruit boxes.



Why can't a wax-coated cardboard box be recycled?

Because the wax covering the box makes it too difficult to recover paper fibres.



Plastic



Plastic items are sorted using an optical sorting machine which groups similar plastic types together and detects and removes non-recyclable plastics.



All firm and flexible plastic containers such as soft drink bottles, takeaway containers, margarine containers, milk and juice bottles, yoghurt tubs, biscuit and sushi trays, detergent and shampoo bottles and disposable plates and cups.



All soft plastics such as plastic bags, plastic film or cling wrap, chip packets, toothpaste tubes, bubble wrap, styrofoam and polystyrene products*, straws and disposable nappies. Hard plastics that are not containers such as toys or toothbrushes cannot be recycled.



Why can't we recycle soft plastics?

While plastic bags and other soft plastic packaging is sometimes made from recyclable content, their light-weight nature often results in them getting caught around moving machine parts, causing machines to jam. You can dispose of soft plastics including bubble wrap in your general waste bin, or return them to the major supermarkets where they are collected and recycled using specialist technology.

* Polystyrene products are accepted at Council's resource recovery centres. See page 22 for details.



Metal (aluminium and steel)



All aluminium and steel packaging can be recycled including aerosol cans, paint tins (empty and dry), aluminium foil and pie trays.



Vegetable and food cans, pet food cans, soft drink cans, pie trays, aerosol cans, aluminium foil and paint tins (empty and dry).



Batteries, gas bottles, wire, scrap iron or tin, cutlery and white goods.



What should I do with other metal items that cannot be recycled through the household recycling bin?

Other household items including batteries, gas bottles, scrap metal or white goods are collected for recycling at Council resource recovery centres. See page 22 for details.



Glass



Only glass used for packaging (e.g. bottles and jars) is collected for recycling through the household recycling bin. Other glass items are manufactured differently which makes them more prone to shattering and less suitable for recycling.



All clear, green and brown bottles and jars, including jam jars, food jars, sauce bottles, beverage bottles, perfume and vitamin bottles.



Drinking glasses, ceramics, window glass, light bulbs, mirror or window glass, heat-proof glass and cookware such as Pyrex.



Why can't I recycle these items?

The glass used for bottles and jars is heavy duty and durable, while other glass types are designed for specific uses which require them to be more fragile, transparent or heat resistant. When mixed with recyclable glass, other glass types weaken the new glass products. It is best to dispose of all non-packaging related glass in your general waste bin.



Larger recycling bins

Upgrade the size of your recycling bin

If your recycling bin is full or overflowing by collection day and you are a Brisbane property owner, you can upgrade the size of your recycling bin for a one-off establishment fee of \$30. Tenants should talk to their property owner or agent.

These larger recycling bins have been ergonomically designed for easy use and provide an additional 100 litres capacity for your household recycling.



Don't let good recycling go to waste. Upgrade your recycling bin today. Visit brisbane.qld.gov.au or call Council on **3403 8888**.

Free for kids!

Get the kids involved in recycling and worm farming at home! Download Lunchtime Legends and Worm World free from the App Store.

Lunchtime Legends

It's lunchtime and the race is on to recycle! Sort the falling rubbish into the two school bins, and beat the clock and your friends to become Brisbane's best recycler. Once you've mastered lunchtime recycling, take your knowledge home and become the king of recycling. But watch out for the possums who will try to raid your bins!



Worm World

Meet with nature's cutest recyclers and take charge of your very own worm farm. They're sensitive little creatures, so keep your worm farm healthy! Watch out for the rats and other nasties that will invade and wreak havoc in your worm farm.

This is a great way for children to learn about worm farms and organic recycling.

Worm World and Lunchtime Legends are also available on brisbane.qld.gov.au



Top ten recycling tips



1

Identify recyclable items around the house.

It's easy if you remember that if it is made from **paper, cardboard, firm flexible plastic, metal (aluminium and steel) or glass**, it can be put in your recycling bin at home.

2

Recycling symbols may not always be right.

Remember if it's made from the five materials listed above, it can go into your recycling bin. Other things, like plastic bags, can only be recycled through other dedicated recycling services. For example, plastic bags can be recycled via some supermarkets and should not be put in your recycling bin at home.

3

Aerosol cans are recyclable. You can safely dispose of all empty aerosol cans and containers that previously held household chemicals in your recycling bin.

4

Trust the process. Do your best to decide if an item can be recycled, but trust the technology at the recycling facility to remove non-recyclables if you get it wrong.

5

Use different bins to collect more. Make collecting your recyclables at home easier by placing a bin for recyclables in your kitchen, bathroom and laundry. Sorting your recyclables at the point of disposal will help you to recycle more.

6

Containers do not need to be rinsed before being placed in your recycling bin. Although rinsing does reduce bin odours, not doing this will not ruin the whole load of recycling or stop the individual item from being recycled.

7

Do not put your recyclables in plastic bags. Instead place the items loose in your recycling bin. Plastic bags cannot be opened at the recycling facility for safety reasons, and all the goods inside are sent to landfill.

8

Don't forget that every little bit counts. Even making the effort to recycle one or two extra items each week, such as the junk mail from the letterbox or the empty air freshener can from the bathroom, helps to conserve precious resources from going to landfill.

9

Remove the lids from containers and bottles before you place them in the recycling bin. This will save space in your bin and ensure that each material type is recycled.

10

Only glass jars and bottles are suitable for recycling. Drinking glasses, ceramics and heat-proof glass (e.g. Pyrex) melt at a different temperature and cannot be recycled. Put these items in your rubbish bin at home.



What CANNOT go in my recycling bin?

Recycling bins are provided to residents for the recycling of **paper, cardboard, firm plastic, metal (aluminium and steel) and glass** packaging materials.

There are many other items that can be recycled from our homes, but these should not be placed in your recycling bin. These items include computers, televisions, white goods, batteries, light bulbs and lots more. See page 22 for other recycling options.

Items that SHOULD NOT be placed in the recycling bin include:

- ✗ plastic bags
- ✗ food waste
- ✗ garden waste
- ✗ disposable nappies
- ✗ clothes.

Plastic bags

Soft plastics, such as plastic bags, garbage bags and cling wrap are light-weight and frequently jam the sorting machines by becoming tangled around rotating machinery parts. Soft plastics can be recycled through specialised collection services located at major supermarkets and should not go in your household recycling bin.

Place your recyclables in your recycling bin loose rather than putting them in plastic bags.



Food waste

Food waste should not go in the recycling bin. Empty your containers of food and liquids before you recycle them. A small amount of residue is acceptable and will not ruin the whole load of recycling. Rinsing is not required, although it helps to reduce odour in your recycling bin.

Other contaminants

You can safely dispose of containers that previously held household chemicals in your recycling bin, as long as they are empty and dry.

Used containers of oil, tins of paint, car batteries and gas bottles cannot be put in your recycling bin, but can be disposed of at one of Council's resource recovery centres every day of the year. See page 20 for details. These items must not be emptied down your sink.

Long items can also be a hazard and interrupt processing. Hoses, wires and hard plastic strapping used in packaging cannot go into your recycling bin.

Other hazardous waste items, such as pool chemicals, pesticides, and acids can be safely disposed of on one of Council's free hazardous waste drop-off days. For more information visit brisbane.qld.gov.au or phone Council on **3403 8888**.



What happens to my recycling?



Your recycling is collected from the kerb by a dedicated recycling truck and travels to the recycling facility, where it passes through a series of manual and mechanical sorting processes.

At the beginning of the sorting process, workers attempt to manually remove potentially harmful items such as gas bottles, or items that are not suitable for recycling such as disposable nappies, garden waste, plastic bags or electronics.

The items then travel through several machines that sort the items by size and material type. By the end of the journey, the items have been grouped by material type and are put into bales, ready for sale and reprocessing.

This is very different from what happens to the waste in your rubbish bin, which goes to landfill. After your rubbish bin is collected, it is taken to a Council facility to be crushed and compacted as much as possible. Compacting materials helps to reduce the size of the waste and prolong the space and life of the landfill. After the rubbish has been compacted, it is loaded into large semi-trailers and taken to the landfill site for disposal.



Recycling at Council's resource recovery centres

Recycling at Council's resource recovery centres is now free and easier than ever.

We have upgraded the sites to provide free recycling for vehicles with a Combined Gross Vehicle Mass (CGVM) under 4.5 tonnes. Green waste and general waste is still accepted and will attract the advertised disposal fees, or you can use your vouchers. When you arrive, please let the staff know what type of material you have to unload.

The centres are open from 6.30am to 5.45pm every day of the year, including public holidays.

* For a list of acceptable items, please see page 22.



 **Nudgee Resource Recovery Centre**

1402 Nudgee Road, Nudgee

 **Willawong Resource Recovery Centre**

360 Sherbrooke Road, Willawong

 **Chandler Resource Recovery Centre**

728 Tilley Road, Chandler

 **Ferny Grove Resource Recovery Centre**

101 Upper Kedron Road, Ferny Grove

Staying safe

When visiting the resource recovery centre remember to dress appropriately to ensure that you stay safe. Fully-enclosed shoes, long pants, protective glasses (e.g. sunglasses), and protective gloves are recommended. Children under 12 and family pets are to remain in the vehicle at all times. If you have a heavy load, bring a friend or family member to help you unload it. Council resource recovery centres are non-smoking sites.



Recycling at Council's resource recovery centres

Council's resource recovery centres accept a wide range of recyclable items free of charge.



Aluminium cans



Whitegoods and appliances



Cardboard and paper



Mobile phones



e-waste



Fluorescent lighting tubes and bulbs



Furniture and household items in reusable condition



Plastic and glass bottles



Clean polystyrene



Empty gas bottles (up to 9kg)



Metals (both ferrous and non-ferrous)



Oil, used mineral engine oil* (maximum 20 litres per customer per visit)



Paints, water based and oil based* (maximum 100 litres per customer per visit)



Car batteries



Household batteries

Normal fees apply for disposal of green waste or use your waste vouchers.

* The limit for each product applies to residents and commercial operators.



Tip shop donations

Residents can donate items in reusable condition for free at any of the four Council resource recovery centres. Items accepted include household furniture, books, toys, sporting equipment and bric-a-brac in clean, working condition.

The tip shops are operated by the Endeavour Foundation. Clothing can be donated to either tip shops or charity clothing bins at resource recovery centres.

Find your nearest Council tip shop

Open weekends only 8am to 4pm

 **Southside Tip Shop**

46 Colebard Street West, Acacia Ridge

 **Northside Tip Shop**

27A Prosperity Place, Geebung

Recycling organics



Composting food and garden waste

Did you know that 52% of what goes to landfill is organic waste from our kitchens and gardens?

Composting and worm farming is an inexpensive, natural process that transforms your kitchen and garden waste into a nutrient-rich fertiliser or mulch for your garden. It's easy to make and use.

Everybody can compost no matter how limited your outdoor space might be. Compost bins are perfect for even the smallest of backyards, while worm farms fit perfectly on patios or in garages.

Worm farms can recycle:

- ✓ fruit scraps (except for citrus such as oranges, mandarins, lemons and limes)
- ✓ vegetable scraps (except for onions, leeks, garlic and chillies)
- ✓ tea bags and coffee grounds
- ✓ egg shells.

Establishing a worm farm is a great family activity that your children will love. Get the kids involved by playing Worm World (available free for iPads). See page 13 for details.





Do you need some help starting out?

Council runs free composting workshops all over the city that teach residents how to compost using a bin or worm farm. For more information, call Council on **3403 8888** or visit Council's website, **brisbane.qld.gov.au**

Compost bins can recycle:

- ✓ fruit and vegetable scraps (even onions and citrus)
- ✓ tea bags and coffee grounds
- ✓ egg shells
- ✓ grass clippings and straw
- ✓ other garden waste, including prunings and shrubs
- ✓ manure from herbivores e.g. cows, horses and sheep (no cat or dog manure)
- ✓ pet hair
- ✓ vacuum cleaner contents
- ✓ wood ash and untreated sawdust.



Rethink your rubbish

Recycling organics

Biodegradable products

Biodegradable and compostable packaging, including bamboo plates, bamboo cutlery and corn starch bags, cannot be put in your recycling bin at home. Reuse these biodegradable products when you can and check with the product supplier about the best disposal methods.

Organic waste such as lawn clippings and fruit and vegetable scraps are biodegradable and compostable and should not be placed in your recycling bin.

Organic garden waste such as garden trimmings and lawn clippings can go in the green waste bin (see page 28-29), composted at home (see pages 24-25) or taken to Council's resource recovery centres for mulching (see pages 20-21).

Organic food waste such as fruit and vegetable scraps can be composted using a worm farm or compost bin at home (see page 24-25) or at a Community Composting hub located at community gardens across Brisbane.



Fruit and vegetable scraps



Bamboo



Community composting hubs

Brisbane City Council has partnered with selected community gardens around Brisbane to help residents turn kitchen scraps into nutrients for soil. Registered participants are eligible to collect a free kitchen caddy to transport their kitchen fruit and vegetable waste waste to their local community composting hub.

To find your local community composting hub and register, visit brisbane.qld.gov.au or phone **3403 8888**.

Recycling organics

Green waste recycling bins

Green waste recycling bins are an easy and affordable way to recycle your garden waste.

Green waste recycling bins are collected fortnightly from your home and the green waste is taken to a green waste recycling facility where it is processed into compost and mulch.

Recycling your lawn clippings, palm fronds, prunings and leaves saves valuable organic resources from going to landfill while helping to create a more sustainable, green and clean city.

If you have large volumes of green waste that won't fit in a 240 litre wheelie bin, consider using one of Brisbane's local businesses that operate a garden bag collection service.

Visit gardenbaggroupp.com.au for more information.



A green waste bin is available for a one-off establishment fee of \$30, and a small quarterly fee payable on your rates if you are the property owner. Tenants should talk to their property owner or agent.



To order your new green waste recycling bin visit brisbane.qld.gov.au or call Council now on **3403 8888**.

Rethink your rubbish



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Business recycling



Recycling at work is now as easy as recycling at home

Let your customers know that your business cares about the environment.

Council has taken all the hard work out of recycling in the workplace with recycling bins for businesses. It's now simple to recycle paper, cardboard, glass, metal and plastic all in one bin!

A recycling bin for your business will also:

- save you time by having all of your recycling in one bin
- reduce the clutter of bins at the back of your shop or office
- reduce the carbon footprint of your business
- reduce waste to landfill.



Call Council on **3403 8888** or visit **brisbane.qld.gov.au** to place an order or for more information.

Rethink your rubbish



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Free Council recycling app

Download the **Brisbane Bin and Recycling app**, available for smartphones and tablets.

This free app includes a bin collection calendar, quick guide to recycling, directions to resource recovery centres and more.

If you don't have a smartphone or tablet you can access the bin collection calendar on Council's website.

For more information visit brisbane.qld.gov.au or phone Council on **3403 8888**.



Download on the
App Store



ANDROID APP ON

Google play



Microsoft



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