

# WASTE REDUCTION CHEAT SHEET

AVOID SENDING ITEMS TO THE LANDFILL BY PRACTICING THE 4RS

## REDUCE

Make less waste

The best choice is to stop waste before it starts! Buy only what you need, and whenever possible, purchase items in bulk and use refillable containers. Avoid single use items by purchasing durable, reusable items instead. Reduce food waste by strategizing how you shop, prepare, and store food. Visit [StopFoodWaste.org](http://StopFoodWaste.org) for more information.



## REUSE

Use it again

Reuse items for their original purpose, or get creative and repurpose them. Reuse is generally preferred to recycling because extending a product's life saves energy, water, and other natural resources.



Buy items in refillable containers or reuse items creatively.

## RECYCLE

Recover materials to make something new

Recycling is a great way to keep unwanted items out of the landfill if they can no longer be reused. Ensure that your recyclables are **empty, clean, and dry** before placing them in your recycling cart, and place them directly in your recycling cart (not inside of a plastic bag).



Glass bottles and jars, metal containers and foil are highly recyclable, and there are currently domestic markets for these materials.



Not all plastic is recyclable. The plastics that are most likely to be recycled are hard plastic bottles, tubs, and jugs. Empty the contents and place the caps back on items before recycling.



Clean, dry paper products such as unlined cardboard and paperboard, newspaper and magazines, mail, paper milk cartons, and clean paper egg cartons can all be recycled. Paper must be free from food or grease stains.



Do not bag your recyclables. Recyclables must be placed directly into your recycling cart (not contained within a plastic bag). Recyclables must be loose in order to properly make their way through recycling sorting equipment.



Do not place loose plastic bags and plastic wrap, straws, utensils, polystyrene foam, food-soiled paper, or any plastic labeled "compostable" in your recycling cart. To avoid sending these items to the landfill, purchase items that can be reused.



Shredded paper is not recyclable. Place shredded paper in your organics cart.

## ROT

Recover organic materials to create compost

Organic matter in the landfill emits greenhouse gas emissions such as carbon dioxide and methane. Composting diverts organic matter from the landfill and creates valuable soil amendment for farms and gardens.



All yard waste, food-soiled, stained, or wet paper, including paper towels, napkins, and shredded paper (wet, dry, or soiled) can be composted. You can compost unlined paper coffee cups, plates, and to-go containers.

Plastic-lined paper products such as coffee cups, ice cream tubs, and to-go containers are not accepted. "Compostable" and "biodegradable" plastics are not accepted at our composting facility, as they contaminate compost loads. These items should be placed in the trash. Do not put pet waste in your organics cart.



No plastic bags of any kind, including clear bags and bags labeled "compostable" or "recyclable", are accepted in the recycling & organics carts.