

# Recycling

[Facts and Tips]

## What is recycling?

Recycling diverts used materials from waste and turns them into new products. Recycled materials are used instead of or in addition to virgin materials—resources taken from nature in their raw form, such as timber or metal ore.

## Why recycle?

Recycling conserves our natural resources, saves landfill space, and saves energy. Alabama law now requires that counties and cities develop comprehensive solid waste management plans, which include waste reduction and recycling goals.





FIRST  
CROSS

12 boxes of  
Summer Fun

PRESIDENT

amazon  
BY2

## Where do you start?

Start the recycling process at home, at work, or at school by separating items that were intended for the trash.

First, determine what materials are recyclable. Determine what types of materials are available for collection in your area. Contact the local recycling coordinator for assistance regarding programs that are available and what is accepted.

Recyclable materials include paper, cardboard, metal cans (aluminum and steel), and most plastics.

Items generally accepted by county and city recycling programs are aluminum cans, steel cans, plastics (#1 and #2), mixed paper, cardboard, and glass.



An aluminum can that is thrown away will still be a can  
500 years from now. (Source: A Recycling Revolution)



# Items for Recycling

## Metals

- Aluminum is a nonferrous metal, meaning that it does not contain iron. It is a sustainable metal that can be recycled over and over again. When recycling, remember to rinse the cans or containers before placing them inside the bins. Rinsing helps reduce insect problems. Aluminum foil is generally not accepted for aluminum recycling. The aluminum recycling process is simply remelting the metal, which is far less expensive and energy intensive than creating new aluminum from bauxite.
- Steel is a ferrous metal, which means it contains iron. Ferrous metals, such as steel, will stick to a magnet. Items made from steel are also recycled over and over again without loss of integrity. Using at least 25 percent recycled steel is the best way to make new steel.



Americans use 2,500,000 plastic bottles every hour.  
Most of them are thrown away. (Source: A Recycling Revolution)



## Plastics

- The most commonly recycled plastic containers are #1 plastics (PETE) and #2 plastics (HDPE). Milk, water, and most other plastic beverage containers are #1 and #2 plastics. Look for the plastic content number on the bottom of the container. The plastics can range from #1 to #7, and acceptable items for recycling may vary by program.

## Paper

- Paper products include newspapers, office paper, magazines, and junk mail. Fibers recovered from these materials can be made into many other products including but not limited to food containers, home insulation, napkins, and coffee filters. According to the Energy Information Administration, making paper from recycled materials results in a 40 percent energy savings over making paper from pulp that has not been recycled.



Approximately 1 billion trees worth of paper are thrown away every year in the United States.

If all of our newspapers were recycled, we could save about 250,000,000 trees each year! (Source: A Recycling Revolution)





We use more than 80,000,000,000 aluminum soda cans every year.

(Source: A Recycling Revolution)

## Glass

- Glass products, such as beverage and food containers, are recyclable, but they must be separated by color. The colors for separation are clear, brown, blue, and green. Glass containers should be free of lids or caps and reasonably clean. Recycled glass is crushed, melted, and made into new glass containers.

## Cardboard

- Cardboard containers are used for many products including cereal boxes, shoe boxes, and packing boxes. Break down cardboard before placing it into the recycling bin, so more recyclable material can be collected in the container. According to the website [cardboardrecycling.org](http://cardboardrecycling.org), more than 85 percent of all products sold in the United States are packaged in cardboard.



If glass manufacturers used 50 percent recycled glass, they would save enough energy to power 45,000 households for one year. This would also save 181,550 tons of waste from landfills each month.

(Source: Earth 911)



LAUNDRY CUARTO DE LAVADO  
LAUNDRY



This box is made from 100% recycled paper.



**More saving.  
More doing.™**

This box is made from 100% recycled paper.



**Be Orange.  
Think Green.**



**369 894**



76365

AVADO

Effective collection of materials is essential to any successful recycling program. Providing adequately labeled and conveniently located recycling bins are two essential components to ensure proper collection of recyclables.



Consumer purchasing of recycled products is also an important step in the recycling process. This consumer participation creates a market for recycled products and makes them more valuable to manufacturers.

The ultimate goal in recycling is to encourage consumers to buy recycled materials and to recycle items at home. Doing so benefits the consumer and the manufacturer and it creates a sustainable solution for our environment.



Cardboard is used to ship 90 percent of all products in the United States.

(Source: Earth 911)



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**For more information**, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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