What to recycle?

There are many waste materials that can be recycled on the Gold Coast. Recycling has many benefits for our environment, society and economy. It conserves natural resources, it saves energy and it reduces the amount of landfill required. We thank you for your efforts and hope that our recycling systems and information will help you to recycle better.

- Sign up for our green waste bin service
- Need a larger recycling bin?

Find out what you can (and can’t) recycle in yellow lid recycling bins and lime lid green waste bins by clicking on the drop-down headings below:

Yellow lid recycling bins

What can I recycle fact sheet

View the below fact sheet for more information about what can be recycled:

What can I recycle?

Use our bin day finder to find out your bin collection day and which week is your recycling week.

Need more space in your recycling bin? Find out how to upsize to a larger recycling bin.

In our yellow lid recycling bins, residents and businesses can recycle:

- All plastic bottles and containers
- Aluminium and steel cans, including empty aerosol cans
- Bottles and jars made only of glass
- Clean cardboard, newspaper, loose paper, junk mail, magazines and cartons

While we prefer your recyclables to be empty and clean to reduce odour and have a safe working environment for our staff, it is not necessary to remove all residues for them to be acceptable.

Items which **cannot** go in your yellow lid recycling bin:

- NO plastic bags (always place your recyclables loosely in the bin)
- NO thin plastic films like glad wrap, bubble wrap or black plastic
- NO disposable nappies
- NO food scraps, green waste or dead animals
- NO clothing, shoes or accessories
- NO pyrex or heat-resistant glass
- NO crockery, china or ceramics
- NO polystyrene or styrofoam
- NO light bulbs or fluorescent tubes
- NO tiles, bricks, stones or soil
- NO syringes.

Materials placed in yellow lid recycling bins go to the Materials Recovery Facility at Carrara to be sorted by machine and by hand. They are then compacted, baled and sent away to be remade into other products.

Lime lid green waste bins

In the lime lid green waste bins, residents and businesses can recycle:

- garden prunings
- grass clippings
- shrubs (shake off the soil)
- weeds and flowers (shake off the soil)
- leaves and loose bark
- palm fronds (fronds must be cut so they can fit into the bin. They cannot be bent as they will become trapped as the bin is emptied into the truck)
- small branches (no more than 15 centimetres in diameter and 40 centimetres in length).

Items which **cannot** go in your lime lid green waste bin:

- NO plastic bags
- NO plastic bags
- NO construction items
- NO gardening equipment or products, like garden tools or gloves
- NO logs and stumps
- NO treated timber
- NO soil, dirt or sand
- NO food scraps
- NO recyclables (put them in your yellow lid recycling bin)
- NO chemicals or liquids
- NO gas cylinders.

Materials placed in the lime lid green waste bins go to several of our large waste and recycling centres for processing and reuse on site where needed. The remaining green waste is then sent away to be made into compost or converted into green energy.

Find out how to order a green waste bin collection service.

If you already have a green waste bin, use our bin day finder to find out your bin collection day and which week is your recycling week (green waste collection is the alternate week to the yellow lid recycling collection service).

We also have a useful fact sheet, What can I recycle? available for download.

At City of Gold Coast waste and recycling centres, you can recycle all of the materials listed above and more. For details of the many recyclables accepted at each waste and recycling centre, visit our waste and recycling centre page.

There are additional recycling services that are available at a limited number of centres. We also have recycling business directories which help you find the local businesses that can recycle many unwanted materials either free or for a fee. And don't forget the local charities and the recycling shops that can turn your trash into someone else's treasure.

Related information

- Additional recycling services
- Commercial waste management
- Green waste bin collection
- Local charities
- Recycling business directory
- Report a problem - Rubbish and recycling (missed bin collection, damaged bin)
- Residential bin collection
- Upsize to a larger recycling bin
- Waste and recycling centres

Key information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brochures, fact sheets &amp; reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What can I recycle?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

External links

- Planet Ark - Recycling near you
- Planet Ark - Business recycling

Frequently asked questions

**Do I have to rinse any of my recyclables before putting them in the recycling bin?**

No, recyclables don't have to be cleaned but must be empty. A minimal amount of food residue is acceptable, and we do appreciate you rinsing your recyclables as it reduces odour and health and safety risks for staff at the Materials Recovery Facility.

**Do I have to remove lids from any recyclables before putting them in the recycling bin?**

No. Lids can be left on most containers (except empty aerosols cans). On or off, lids are recyclable so please put them in your recycling bin.

**Why can't I put drinking glasses and broken window glass in the recycling bin?**

The glass used in classware other than class bottles and jars has a wide variety of properties and melting temperatures. This means if it is sent for recycling, it may not melt properly or form floats (visible to the naked eye) in the melt leaving it to be disposed of in the general waste stream.
Why can't I recycle coat hangers, saucers and other metals in the recycling bin?

Metal items other than aluminum and steel case cannot be recycled in the household recycling bin as the equipment at the Materials Recovery Facility cannot handle their irregular shape. Items get caught in the machinery and the plant has to be stopped, which can be very time-consuming and costly. However, there are scrap metal recycling facilities available free of charge to Gold Coast residents at all waste and recycling centres.

Do I have to remove the plastic lids and nozzles from my aerosol cans?

Yes! Only empty aerosol cans can be put in your household recycling bin, and it is preferable that any plastic lids and nozzles be removed if possible.

Can I recycle pizza boxes?

Yes. They can be put into the household recycling bin as long as the food residue has been removed. A small amount of oil and food residue is acceptable, but if it is too contaminated, just rip off the clean cardboard top and place it in the recycling bin and put the drip base in the waste bin.

Why can't I recycle tissues or serviettes?

Tissues, paper towels and serviettes are often contaminated with food, grease or body fluids which makes them unsuitable for recycling. If you have a compost heap at home, these items can be added to your compost bin.

What about junk mail, magazines and brochures – is glossy paper recyclable?

Yes. All paper products are recyclable and can be placed loosely in the household recycling bin. The glossy finish is made up of clay and ink that can be removed during the recycling process.

Do I have to remove sticky tape, staples or the plastic window from envelopes?

No. They are removed during the recycling process, along with dyes and other grit.

Can I put nappies in the recycling bin?

No. All nappies must be placed in the general waste bin. There are no nappies on the market that can be placed in our recycling bins.

Do I have to remove the labels from plastic containers?

No. If it is easy to remove them, then please do, but otherwise just put your clean plastic bottles and containers in the recycling bin with labels attached.

How do I know which plastics can be recycled?

Plastic containers and bottles can be recycled. Other plastic items that can be recycled include yoghurt and margarine containers, squeezeable bottles, detergent bottles and strawberry purses.

Items that cannot be recycled in your recycling bin include plastic bags, polystyrene meat trays (if you can see the meat tray it will be polystyrene), cellophane or bread bags.

Most major Gold Coast supermarkets have special bins near the checkouts where clean plastic bags can be recycled for free. Some supermarkets will now also collect soft plastics including bread, past and frozen food bags, confectionery and biscuit packets. The soft plastics are then recycled and turned into bolts which are used in cars and boats.

Why can't I recycle plastic bags and other thin film plastic in the recycling bin?

Even though plastic bags and wrappers are made from recyclable plastic and can be recycled at special facilities, we can't accept them in the household recycling bin. They get caught in the sorting machinery at the Materials Recovery Facility and may stop other items being recycled. If you place your recyclables in plastic bags in the recycling bin, they can't be recycled and will end up in landfill. Most major Gold Coast supermarkets have special bins near the checkouts where clean plastic bags can be returned for recycling. Some supermarkets will now also collect soft plastics including bread, past and frozen food bags, confectionery and biscuit packets. The soft plastics are then recycled and turned into bolts which are used in cars and boats.

Polythene meat trays have a plastic identification code of 6 – does that mean I can recycle them?

No. Only rigid plastic containers can be placed in your household recycling bin for collection, not soft forms such as expanded polythene. The plastic identification code stamped on plastic products identifies the type of plastic resin it is made from, not whether it is recyclable or not. Even though rigid plastic items stamped with a plastic identification code of 6 (e.g. yoghurt containers) are recyclable at the Materials Recovery Facility, expanded polythene products (e.g. disposable meat trays, foam cups, polythene packaging) are not able to be recycled there.

If the household recycling bin is full, can I leave items next to the bin for pick up?

No. Anything not in the bin will not be collected as all bins are mechanically lifted by the truck. All recyclables must be in the bin with the lid closed properly or the truck can't empty it. Excess recycling can be dropped off free of charge by Gold Coast residents at our Waste and Recycling Centres.
The recycling bin is always full. Can I get a bigger recycling bin?

Yes. You can apply to City of Gold Coast to replace the standard 240 litre recycling bin with a larger 360 litre bin. Find more information about the service on our [Update to a larger recycling bin](https://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/environment/waste-reduction-and-recycling) page.