

## Recycle and reuse

### What does recycling mean?

Recycling is the process of changing waste materials into new materials and objects. An example of recycling is the collection of old newspapers and magazines from households for re-pulping and manufacture into new paper products. This means that material that would be buried as landfill will be mechanically or chemically processed and reused as a different product.

---

### What products can be recycled?

There are a wide range of products that can be recycled. These include

- **glass** the glass is sorted by colour and washed to remove any impurities. It is then crushed and melted, then moulded into new products, such as bottles and jars, brick manufacture or decorative uses
  - **paper** can be used to make cardboard boxes of all sizes and shapes, tissue products and paper towel
  - **plastic** can be recycled. The most common are HDPE and PET. HDPE is a versatile plastic often used for packaging. It carries low risk of leaching and is easily recycled into new items. PET is a strong, lightweight plastic. It has a high melting point of 245°C, which leads to it being formed and recycled in alternative ways
  - **textiles** can be recycled in different ways. For instance, polyester is granulated and shaped into pellets. These are then melted and used to create fibres which can be used to make new polyester fabrics. Recycled cotton is collected from industry or consumer waste. Items are separated by type and colour, then shredded by a machine into smaller pieces and further into crude fibre. It can then be re-spun back into yarn for reuse and given a new life as another product
  - **electronics** of every kind can be recycled. Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations were introduced in 2007. items include: fridges, freezers, microwaves, dishwashers and washing machines. Smaller household appliances like irons, toasters, kettles and vacuum cleaners. IT and communication equipment like laptops, fax machines, printers, phones and smartphones
  - **garden and food waste** can be recycled by composting
- 

### Where to recycle?

The Council has produced guides and two videos about recycling in Newcastle:

- [A-Z of recycling](#) what can be recycled, what needs to be crushed, rinsed and what can be donated or passed on
- [what happens to your recycling?](#)
- [keep it in your Caddy – recycle glass responsibly](#)
- [take items to your Household recycling centre](#)
- [locations of Newcastle’s Household recycling centres](#)

[Recycle your electricals](#) is a website where you can find the nearest places to you to recycle your electrical items. Anything with a plug, battery or cable can be reused or recycled. Local shops, cafes, leisure centres and recycling hubs have joined the scheme so you can drop off your small electrical items to be recycled. helping to reduce waste and stop things going to landfill that can be recycled.

[TerraCycle](#) is an international recycling and reuse company. You can drop off hard to recycle items to their free recycling programmes locally or order a Zero Waste Box to fill and be collected at a cost.

You can recycle more now in high street stores and supermarkets. Drop off your:

- **Pill blister packs** for recycling at Superdrugs stores
- **Plastic bags, film or wrapping, pet food pouches and crisp packets** at large supermarkets such as Tesco, Morrisons, Sainsburys and Aldi
- **Coat hangers** at large supermarkets or clothes shops
- **Coffee pods:** Most coffee pods manufacturers now recycle their pods, such as Nespresso and Dolce Gusto. You can order bags to send your pods for recycling or collect free [Podback Collect+](#) recycling bags from Morrisons customer service desks. Postage is free of charge
- **Water filters:** at large supermarkets such as Tesco and Morrisons
- **Contact Lenses:** at Boots stores. They run the ACUVUE® Contact Lens Free Recycling Programme for any lens

[The Lemington Centre](#) has a electrical recycling point for smaller items. This includes:

- small household appliances toasters, irons
- IT equipment – mice, keyboards and laptops,
- Radios and DVD players, phones

## Biodegradable waste

A biodegradable material can be decomposed by bacteria or other natural organisms and does not add to pollution. Waste materials are food materials, kitchen wastes, human waste, manure, paper waste and animals that have died. Micro organisms and other factors, such as light or temperature, break down complex substances into simpler organic matter, which eventually suspend and fade into the soil. The whole process is natural, which can be rapid or slow. Therefore, the environmental issues and risks caused by biodegradable waste is low.

## Non-biodegradable waste

A non-biodegradable material cannot be broken down by natural organisms and acts as a source of pollution. They remain on earth for thousands of years without any degradation. The manufacturing processes for many products has made them more temperature resistant and more durable even after use. Examples of non-biodegradable materials include: glass, metal, batteries, plastic bottles, tetra packs, medical waste and carbon paper.

---

## Refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle and rot

The 5 Rs are essentially the order in which to reduce waste. Think of them as plans A, B, C, D, and E. If you can't do step one, move on to the next, and so forth:

- **refuse** what you don't need (single-use plastic, plastic grocery bags, non biodegradable trash bags, plastic razors, coffee cups)
  - **reduce** what you do need (stop buying new clothes, cut back on how often you do laundry, don't always upgrade for the latest smartphone)
  - **reuse** by either buying second hand or repurposing things
  - **recycle** only that which can't be eliminated by the former three
  - **rot** what's left. Compost what you can
- 

## Composting

Composting makes a positive impact on our environment. Composting is the process of breaking down organic waste. During composting, micro organisms eat the organic (carbon containing) waste and break it down into its simplest parts. This produces a fibre-rich, carbon-containing humus with nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. The micro organisms break the material down through aerobic respiration. In other words, composting is nature's way of recycling natural waste.

National waste consists of 26.5% paper product, 7.5% wood, 7.6% yard trimmings, and 16.4% food scraps. Added together, that's 57.8% of total waste that could be used for composting

Compostable materials fall into two categories. Both are necessary for a successful compost pile and perform best when alternated in thin layers.

**Green:** nitrogen rich materials like live plant material and fruit/vegetable waste. These provide moisture to your pile and break down quickly. Examples of composting greens from the kitchen are: fruit and vegetable scraps and seeds; crushed egg shells; grass cuttings from the garden

**Brown:** carbon rich materials like dead plant matter and wood-based waste. These provide aeration and structure, but break down slowly so work best when chopped into small pieces. Examples of composting browns from the kitchen are: real wine corks (cut up small); crumbs and nut shells; paper torn into small strips and cardboard boxes

**Water:** most organic materials will generate their own moisture as they break down, but sometimes a little water must be added to achieve the desired damp sponge consistency

**Do not compost:**

Processed foods; citrus; garlic and onions; rhubarb leaves and poisonous plants; dry grains; meat and bones; oils; soap; plastic; glass. This is because worms will avoid these items and worms are your friend in the composting cycle. Also avoid putting cooked food into your compost as it can attract vermin and pests.

---

## Plastic free living

At least 2 million tonnes of plastic enters the sea from rivers in the UK every year. Globally, plastic kills a million seabirds and 100,000 sea mammals, turtles and fish per year and many people don't realise that our plastic litter can impact marine life, even if we live many miles away from the sea. Every year, the average person in the UK uses 150 plastic bottles. Over 5 billion plastic bottles are littered, incinerated or sent to landfill. If you switch to a reusable water bottle we could save almost 7 tonnes of plastic from entering rivers and oceans every year.

There are seven main types of plastic that you use around your home. These items may have identification numbers on them. These numbers, in a triangle with arrows, are called their 'plastic resin codes'. Have a look at the bottom of your tubs or yoghurt pots or on soft drink bottle labels. You should see the numbers there. In Newcastle you can recycle plastic items displaying numbers 1, 2 and 5.

Examples of what you could do to avoid plastic waste:

- reduce plastic bottle usage
  - dispose of cigarette butts in general waste and not on the ground or on sand or you could choose plant derived filters
  - look for sustainable and reusable products like period pants, menstrual cups, nappies and reusable pads and face wipes
  - refill water bottles, refill beauty and bath products
  - use chemical free toilet paper which may reach the sea.
  - choose bath and beauty products which are plastic free and sustainably produce
- 

## Reduce your plastic bottle or cup usage

There are over 300 locations across the Newcastle area where you can fill up your water bottle, 100 of which are in the City Centre. Among them are well-known chains like Greggs, Costa and Starbucks, along with museums, pubs and independent cafes. You can use the [Refill](#) app to find them or check for the campaign's blue and white window stickers. In Newcastle City Centre, they include Greggs, Caffe Nero, Starbucks, John Lewis, Pret and Lush, Brunswick Methodist Church, Newcastle City Library

You can carry a reusable coffee cup to use at coffee shops.

---

## Reuse paint

[The Community Repaint Network](#) gives households, businesses and organisations the opportunity to reuse paint or to use remanufactured paint and reduce waste and paint going into

landfill. You can donate paint or request paint, Our nearest scheme is in County Durham and there are schemes in Darlington and Middlesbrough.

---

## Leave Newcastle Happy

Leave Newcastle Happy is a clean-up campaign organised collaboratively by Newcastle University Students Union, Newcastle University, Northumbria Students Union, Northumbria University & Newcastle City Council around the start and end of the academic year.

The campaign adds extra bins, skips and recycling points across areas of Newcastle. This gives students moving out of their private accommodation a better way to recycle goods.

---

## Resources

There are recycling and reuse campaigns every year such as [world refill day](#) in June, [Plastic Free July](#) and [#Zero Waste week](#) in September

Read more about recycling and re-using:

- [Money saving and sustainable ideas for Christmas](#)
- [Affordable and reusable furniture](#)
- [Affordable electrical items](#)
- [Help with clothing](#)

Last updated: October 22, 2024

---

## Useful Organisations

### Refill

**Website:** <https://www.refill.org.uk/>

**Address:** Studio 5 York Court, BS2 8QH

### Recycle Now

**Website:** <http://www.recyclenow.com/>

### Reuse Network

**Email:** [info@reuse-network.org.uk](mailto:info@reuse-network.org.uk)

**Website:** <https://reuse-network.org.uk/>

**Telephone:** 0800 085 8339

**Address:** 48 -54 West Street, BS2 0BL

## **Community Transport – Home Furniture Reuse (East End)**

**Email:** [newcastle@communitytransport.org](mailto:newcastle@communitytransport.org)

**Website:** <https://www.communitytransport.org/ct-furniture-newcastle-east>

**Telephone:** 0800 917 4397

**Address:** The Grand, NE6 1JR

## **Community Transport – Home Furniture Reuse (West End)**

**Email:** [newcastle@communitytransport.org](mailto:newcastle@communitytransport.org)

**Website:** <https://www.communitytransport.org/ct-furniture-newcastle-west>

**Telephone:** 0800 917 4397

**Address:** Unit 2, NE4 6QA

## **Nil Living**

**Email:** [info@nilliving.com](mailto:info@nilliving.com)

**Website:** <https://www.nilliving.com/>

**Telephone:** 07875 624 296

**Address:** Unit 106/107 Alley 3, NE1 5QN

## **Recyke y'bike**

**Website:** [www.recyke-y-bike.org](http://www.recyke-y-bike.org)

**Telephone:** 0191 265 4197

**Address:** Recyke y' bike, NE6 2AR

## **TerraCycle**

**Email:** [customersupport@terracycle.co.uk](mailto:customersupport@terracycle.co.uk)

**Website:** <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB>

**Telephone:** 01465 915 018

**Address:** Sabichi House, UB6 7JD

## **Orange Box North East**

**Email:** orangeboxnortheast@yahoo.com

**Website:** <http://www.orangeboxnortheast.org.uk>

**Telephone:** 0191 224 2116

**Address:** Unit 13 Brough Park Trading Estate, NE6 2YF

## **Freecycle**

**Website:** <https://www.freecycle.org/>

**Telephone:** 0191 224 2116

## **Foundations Furniture**

**Email:** foundations.project@btconnect.com

**Website:** <http://www.foundationsfurniture.co.uk/>

**Telephone:** 0191 477 8337

**Address:** Units 1 and 2 Teams Craft Workshops , NE8 2PB

## **Community Repaint Network**

**Email:** repaint@resourcefutures.co.uk

**Website:** <https://communityrepaint.org.uk/>

**Telephone:** 0117 914 3452

## **Recycle your electricals**

**Website:** <https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/>

**Telephone:** 0117 914 3452

---

## Related Articles

[Money saving and sustainable ideas for Christmas](#)

[Affordable electrical goods](#)

[Affordable furniture](#)

[Support for people with low incomes](#)

[Cost of living support](#)

[Help with clothing](#)