

Get Ready to Recycle!

Most people really want to recycle but often find it difficult to make it happen. The first step to organizing your recyclables is to get all the materials you need in one place. Here are some items you should have on hand:

- String or twine
- Bins, trash cans
- Grocery bags
- Washing supplies
- Paper shredder
- Deodorizer, baking soda
- Blue or clear bags (if applicable)
- Bin liners, boxes for organics (if applicable)

Your recycling should be in a confined area that is easy to get to but out of sight. Think about where each of these activities occurs and select a location for storing your recyclables that is convenient based on where your recyclables come from (kitchen, office, living room, etc.) and where they go (basement, garage, straight to the curb).

Select appropriate sized bins for each type of recyclable and the room they are needed in. Label bins so that household members and guests are clear on where to dispose of items. For those unfamiliar with your city's recycling system have a list of items that go in each bin and be sure to list things that should not go in (e.g., used tissue). Post this in your recycling area. Try sprinkling baking soda in the bottom of trash cans and recycle bins to keep odours down. Sprinkle some in each time you change the bag and just add hot water when it is time to clean them out.

Select a spot to put bottles that need to be rinsed before recycling and do so at the end of washing you dishes each day. You can also opt to wash things right away. If you don't have a small green bin for your kitchen, an ice cream or cat litter container are great air tight receptacles to prevent fruit flies and odour. Be sure to empty your bins regularly to prevent the growth of mould.

Have a shelf or container with scissors, string, bags, and bin liners nearby. This will make the recycling process easier. Keep a box of baking soda in your recycling area to keep things fresh. Try to break down boxes right away to save space and store them alongside your bins. Any paper with personal information on it (credit card offers, bank statements, addresses) should be shredded. Put a blue bag right in the shredder receptacle to make emptying it easier.

The most important part of keeping your recyclables organized is to create a routine. Set a time or day where you empty bins, bundle cardboard, empty the green bin, and remove recyclables to their larger holding spot. Be sure to keep track of your next pick up day and alternative pick up dates for holidays.

Recycling can be simplified when you involve the whole family, and everyone knows the systems and sticks to the routine. Encourage children to get started and teach them the recycling routines. You are never too young or old to learn how to reduce waste and practice proper recycling.

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