

Recycling Plastics Facts Sheet

Why does the collection service say plastic bottles only?

The reason for this is that bottles are very easy to identify, account for 40% of all household plastic waste and are easily separated into three polymer (plastic) types. These are PET (e.g. fizzy drink bottles and squash bottles), HDPE (e.g. milk and juice bottles (natural HDPE) and detergent bottles (coloured HDPE)) and PVC (e.g. large squash bottles and water dispenser bottles).

What do I have to do with my bottles before I recycle them?

Please rinse and squash your plastic bottles before putting them in your green box. Rinsing the bottles maintains the quality of the collected plastic and stops any nasty smells while you store your bottles.

Do I need to take the labels off my bottles?

No. The labels will come off during the recycling process. The bottles will be thoroughly washed and then chopped up. The labels will disintegrate and be removed in the washing process.

What do I do with the bottle tops?

Please take the tops off the bottles and discard them. They are made from a different type of plastic and can reduce the value of the collected plastic if left on. There is no need to remove the small collar left by the top, as plastic reprocessors can cope with these being left on.

Why can't I put in things like yoghurt pots and margarine tubs?

Items such as margarine tubs and other rigid food containers (ie. fast food trays) are made from a very wide range of polymers, often of different types blended together. These are much more difficult to identify and separate efficiently. It is also more difficult to sell the material as markets for mixed plastics are currently limited.

Yogurt pots are not usually accepted in plastics recycling schemes as they are generally made from polystyrene. This is an entirely different type of polymer to those used in plastic bottles and mixing them reduces the value of the collected bottles. Markets for polystyrene yogurt pots are currently limited.








Try using yogurt and margarine tubs for other uses around the house, for example, plant pots to grow seedlings. Local primary schools or play groups may also like to accept the tubs to be used for craft activities.

What can I do with all of my carrier bags?

Carrier bag recycling facilities are starting to appear in supermarkets across the country. Please check with your local supermarket.

For further information see www.recycle-more.co.uk

Plastics Identification Chart

Polymer Type	Polymer Identification Code	Some common examples	Accepted for Recycling
Polyethylene terephthalate		Fizzy drink bottles, water bottles, mouthwash bottles, shampoo and conditioner bottles	Yes
High density polyethylene		Detergent bottles, bleach bottles, milk bottles	Yes
Polyvinyl chloride		Pipes and fittings, tubing, credit cards, cable sheathing	No
Low density polyethylene		Refuse sacks, bubble wrap	No
Polypropylene		Bottle tops, syrup bottles, yoghurt and margarine containers, drinking straws, ice-cream containers, flower pots	No
Polystyrene		Fast food trays, plastic egg containers, hot drink cups, insulation	No
Unallocated references		Used on items that are made from unallocated polymer blends. Although a 'recycling triangle' is shown, the symbol is used here as a material identification code and does not mean that it can be recycled.	No

