

# Reuse and Recycling A-Z

An A to Z of items which County Durham residents can reuse or recycle.

It is always best to reuse or recycle items, rather than throwing them in your rubbish bin. Check the list below to see what household items can be reused or recycled.

If there's an item you're wondering about, it's likely someone else is thinking about it too, so get in touch and we can add it to our list, email [wasteaware@durham.gov.uk](mailto:wasteaware@durham.gov.uk). For further information please visit [www.durham.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.durham.gov.uk/recycling)

## A

### **Aerosol Cans**

Aerosols such as deodorant, furniture polish, air fresheners and hair spray can be put in your recycling bin. You can also recycle them at the can banks at all of the household waste recycling centres.

### **Aluminium Foil**

Put clean aluminium foil and foil food trays in your recycling bin.

### **Aluminum Tubes**

Put clean aluminum tubes such as tomato puree tubes in your recycling bin.

### **Aluminium Cans**

See 'Cans'.

### **Aprons**

Disposable aprons (personal protective equipment/PPE) should be placed in the rubbish bin as they cannot be recycled.

### **Ash**

Cooled wood ash can be added to your home compost bin or heap as it contains valuable minerals which improve soil quality.

Coal ash cannot be composted, due to high levels of tar and impurities. It should be bagged and placed within your rubbish bin or taken to one of the household waste recycling centres for disposal.

## B

### **Bags (Fashion/handbags)**

Donate bags to local charity shops, sell online, or give to family and friends.

### **Batteries**

You cannot place batteries in your recycling bin or box. You can recycle your household batteries at one of the household waste recycling centres or one of our Small Electrical Recycling Points. Selected County Durham schools have battery collection containers for use by their pupils and parents. Also high street retailers that sell batteries accept them for recycling, such as supermarkets.

### **Bedding**

Please don't put bedding in your household bins. Take your bedding to an animal rescue centre (please check with your local centre). You can recycle your old bedding at one of the

household waste recycling centres.

### **Belts**

Please don't put them in your household bins. You can donate them to local charity shops, sell online or give to family/friends.

### **Biscuit Tins**

Recycle biscuit and sweet tins in your recycling bin. Alternatively they can be reused for storing homemade cakes and treats.

### **Blankets**

Please don't put them in your household bins. Donate to local charity shops or take to a household waste recycling centre textile bank. Some animal charities may accept blankets. Please contact your local centre.

### **Blister Packs**

Empty medicine blister packs cannot be recycled. Please place these in your refuse bin.

### **Books**

If in good condition you can take books to your local charity shop or book shop. You could also see if anyone you know would like the book. There are also book banks at some of the recycling bring sites. You cannot recycle books in your recycling bin.

Instead of buying new books why not use your local library or borrow them from a friend.

### **Bottles**

Put glass in your recycling box. Put plastic bottles in your recycling bin. Glass bottles can also be taken to the glass banks at the recycling bring sites or household waste recycling centres to be recycled. Please rinse clean and replace lids before recycling.

### **Bubble Wrap**

You cannot recycle bubble wrap. You can take your bubble wrap to your local charity shop to see if they want it for wrapping any breakable goods. If you cannot find a use for it, you will have to put it in your rubbish bin.

## **C**

### **Cans**

Put aluminium and steel food and drink cans in your recycling bin. You can also take cans to some of the household waste recycling centres. Please rinse before recycling.

### **Cardboard Boxes**

Cardboard boxes can go in your recycling bin. Large cardboard boxes can be flattened and placed next to your recycling bin or you can take them to the household waste recycling centres. Please make sure cardboard is dry.

### **Cards**

Greetings cards can be placed in your recycling bin. Cards can also go in the cardboard skip at most of the household waste recycling centres. Some supermarkets will recycle Christmas cards for a short time after Christmas. Cards with decorative glitter, ribbon/bows, glue or musical attachments cannot be recycled in your blue lidded recycling bin.

### **Carpets**

Please don't put them in your household bins. You can recycle your old carpets at the household waste recycling centres. Get carpets collected from your home. Book and pay for a council bulky waste collection online – [www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste](http://www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste)

## **Carrier Bags**

Plastic carrier bags cannot be placed in your recycling bin. Please reuse carrier bags as many times as possible and try to remember to take them shopping with you so you don't have to pay for new bags. Look out for plastic bag recycling points in supermarkets. Compostable plastic bags are not recyclable. Put them in your home composting bin.

## **Cartons**

Put soft drinks, fruit juice and soup cartons in your recycling bin. Cartons can also be recycled at the household waste recycling centres. Please wash and squash cartons and replace lids before recycling.

## **Catalogues**

Store catalogues can go in your recycling bin with the rest of your paper. You can opt out of unwanted catalogues and junk mail by signing up to the Mail Preference Service.

## **CDs and DVDs**

If your CDs and DVDs are in good condition you can take them to your local charity shop, or why not make them into bird scarers for your allotment or garden.

The CD cases can be recycled at the hard plastic container at the household waste recycling centres. The DVD cases and the CD and DVD discs cannot be recycled, so if you cannot find a use for them, they will need to go in your rubbish bin.

## **Cereal Boxes**

Flatten down your cardboard boxes and add them to your recycling bin. You cannot recycle the cereal box inner bag, this will have to go in your rubbish bin.

## **Ceramics**

Do not place ceramic items in your recycling bin. You can recycle ceramic items such as tiles at the household waste recycling centres.

## **China Plates and Ornaments**

If they are unbroken, you can donate them to a charity shop. Otherwise please put these in your rubbish bin as they cannot be recycled.

## **Cling Film**

Do not place Cling Film in your recycling bin, Cling Film can be recycled alongside Soft Plastics at most Supermarkets. Reduce the amount of cling film you use by storing sandwiches and food in sealable plastic containers which can be reused.

## **Clothing**

Please don't place clothes in your household bins. You can give unwanted clean clothes and textiles e.g. curtains, towels or bed covers to charity shops. Local cat and dog shelters may accept old bedding and towels. They can also be taken to one of the household waste recycling centres or recycling bring sites. Check which sites accept textiles at [www.durham.gov.uk/hwrc](http://www.durham.gov.uk/hwrc) and [www.recyclenow.com/local-recycling](http://www.recyclenow.com/local-recycling). Visit [www.durham.gov.uk/clothesrecycling](http://www.durham.gov.uk/clothesrecycling) for more tips on how to revive, reduce, reuse or recycle clothes.

## **Coffee Pods**

The single-use pods used in coffee machines are not accepted in the recycling bin. These can go in your refuse bin or Podback offers a local drop-off service through Collect + by Yodel. Currently, pods from 11 coffee brands including Nespresso, Nescafé Dolce Gusto, Tassimo, L'OR and CRU Kafe can be recycled through Podback. For more information on the service

available in your area visit <https://www.podback.org/>

### **Cooking Oil**

You can recycle your cooking oil at all the household waste recycling centres. Please do not pour cooking oil down the sink, toilet or drain.

### **Corks Synthetics/Plastic**

Put plastic and synthetic corks in your rubbish bin.

### **Crisp Packets**

Do not place crisp packets and other foil-like films such as chocolate bar and biscuit wrappers in your recycling bin. These items can usually be recycled along with soft plastics at most supermarkets. They need to go in your rubbish bin. Crisp packets are made from a variety of plastics such as polypropylene, foil backed, laminates etc and because of the mixture of different types they are difficult to recycle.

### **Curtains**

Please don't put them in your household bins. Donate to local charity shops, sell online or give to family/friends.

## **D**

### **Disposable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Items such as aprons, face masks and gloves cannot be recycled and should be placed in your rubbish bin at home.

### **Drinks Glasses**

Put broken drinks and wine glasses in your rubbish bin as they cannot be recycled. Please wrap first to avoid sharp edges. Undamaged glasses can be taken to a charity shop.

### **Dusters**

Wash and reuse. When unusable, please place in your rubbish bin (not recycling bin).

### **Duvets**

In clean and good condition – donate to local charity shops. Some animal charities may accept duvets in good condition. Please check with your local animal rescue centre. Soiled duvets can be placed in your household rubbish bin as a last resort.

## **E**

### **Egg Boxes**

Cardboard egg boxes can go in your recycling bin. You can also compost them.

### **Elastic Bands**

You cannot recycle elastic bands. Put them in your rubbish bin.

### **Envelopes**

All paper envelopes can be placed in your recycling bin.

### **Engine oil**

You can take small quantities of your used engine oil to the household waste recycling centre to be recycled. When you bring your oil to a site, we advise that it is in the original container and clearly labelled, so that site staff can be sure of the correct way to dispose of it.

## **E-cigarettes**

You can recycle undamaged e-cigarettes and vaping devices at certain following Small WEEE collection points. Check where your nearest e-cigarette recycling point is at [www.durham.gov.uk/weee](http://www.durham.gov.uk/weee)

## **F**

### **Fabric**

Reuse for dusters/cleaning clothes. Upcycle into clothing/cushion covers etc.

### **Face Masks**

Disposable face masks should be placed in the rubbish bin as they cannot be recycled.

Reusable face masks can be washed and reused many times. At the end of their life, if they are cotton, they can be composted at home or placed in the rubbish bin.

### **Foil**

See 'Aluminium foil'.

### **Food Packaging**

See Plastic pots, tubs and trays, Polystyrene, Polythene, Aluminium Foil, Shrink Wrap, Cling Film and Glass Bottles and Jars

### **Food Tins**

See 'Cans'.

### **Food Waste**

We cannot recycle your food waste so please don't put it in your recycling bin. You can compost most of your kitchen waste (except cooked foods, meat and dairy). Otherwise your food waste goes into your rubbish bin. For advice and tips on how to make the most of your food and how to reduce your food waste, visit [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com)

### **Fridges or Freezers**

If your fridge or freezer is in good working order you can take it to your local furniture reuse scheme – [www.durham.gov.uk/reuse](http://www.durham.gov.uk/reuse), or the reuse scheme may collect it. Broken fridges and freezers can be collected as part of the bulky waste collection – pay and book online – [www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste](http://www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste). Alternatively you can take them to your nearest household waste recycling centre [www.durham.gov.uk/hwrc](http://www.durham.gov.uk/hwrc)

### **Furniture**

Furniture and electrical appliances in good condition can be donated to your local furniture reuse scheme – [www.durham.gov.uk/reuse](http://www.durham.gov.uk/reuse). Furniture which is unsuitable for reuse can be disposed of at one of the household waste recycling centres – [www.durham.gov.uk/hwrc](http://www.durham.gov.uk/hwrc) or you can book and pay for a bulky waste collection – [www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste](http://www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste)

## **G**

### **Garden Waste**

Put garden waste in your garden waste bin if you receive and have subscribed to this service. You can check at [www.durham.gov.uk/gardenwaste](http://www.durham.gov.uk/gardenwaste).

You can also take garden waste to the household waste recycling centres or use a compost bin. Alternatively, you can have up to six bags of garden waste removed as a bulky waste collection. There is a charge for the bulky waste collection service. If you live in the Teesdale

area you may be eligible for the Rotters collection service.

### **Glass Bottles and Jars**

Glass bottles and jars can go in your recycling box. They can also be taken to recycling bring sites or household waste recycling centres. Clean metal lids and caps can now be recycled in your recycling bin. If they are a mix of metal and other materials such as plastic, these should go in your rubbish bin.

### **Glass (Broken)**

Please wrap the glass to avoid sharp edges/pieces and place in your rubbish bin.

### **Glass Panes**

Panes of glass cannot be put in your recycling box. It has a different composition from glass bottles and needs to be collected separately. Please take them to a household waste recycling centre.

### **Gloves**

Disposable gloves (personal protective equipment/PPE) should be placed in the rubbish bin as they cannot be recycled.

### **Greaseproof/Wax Paper**

Put greaseproof or wax paper in your rubbish bin.

## **H**

### **Hangers**

Coat hangers cannot be placed in your recycling bin or box. They can be reused over and over again. Ask local charity shops if they need spare hangers for displaying clothes and take metal hangers back to the dry-cleaners to be reused rather than throwing them away. Some local high street retailers collect hangers for recycling.

### **Hard Plastic**

Hard plastic such as garden furniture, buckets, plant pots and childrens' toys cannot be put in your recycling bin. You can take these to a household waste recycling centre for recycling.

## **I**

### **Ink-Jet Cartridges**

Put non-refillable ink-jet cartridges in your rubbish bin. Many charities and organisations will take your used printer cartridges and will recycle or refill them.

## **J**

### **Juice Cartons**

See 'Cartons'

### **Juice Bottles**

See 'Plastic bottles'

### **Junk Mail**

Put unwanted mail such as leaflets and unaddressed letters in your recycling bin. If you don't wish to receive junk mail you can be removed from most direct mailing lists/databases by visiting the Mail Preference Service.

## **K**

### **Kitchen Roll Tubes**

The cardboard inner tube of kitchen rolls can be placed in your recycling bin.

## **L**

### **Laminated**

Laminated paper and cardboard goes in your rubbish bin.

### **Letters**

Put letters in your recycling bin. We recommend you remove and shred any personal details before recycling. Shredded paper can be composted.

### **Lids (plastic)**

Plastic lids can now be recycled. Please wash and squash cartons and plastic bottles and replace the lids. Trigger sprays (like those on cleaning product bottles) can also now be recycled. Wash and squash the bottle and replace the trigger spray. Bottle pumps (like those on soap bottles) cannot be recycled and should go in your rubbish bin.

### **Lids and caps (metal)**

Clean metal lids and caps can now be recycled in your recycling bin. If they are a mix of metal and other materials such as plastic, these should go in your rubbish bin.

### **Light Bulbs**

Energy saving light bulbs and fluorescent tubes contain small amounts of mercury, which is hazardous, and should not be put into your rubbish or recycling bin. They should be taken for recycling to your local household waste recycling centre.

### **Loo Roll Tube**

The cardboard inner tube of toilet rolls go in your recycling bin.

## **M**

### **Magazines**

Magazines can be reused. Doctors, dental surgeries and hairdressers are usually grateful for them. Magazines can be put in your recycling bin or in the paper banks at the household waste recycling centres.

### **Margarine Tubs**

Margarine tubs (clean) can be put in your recycling bin but they are also great for storing food, instead of using cling film. Please wash clean before recycling.

### **Mattresses**

You can take your old mattress to the household waste recycling centres for disposal or if you are buying a new one, ask the shop if they have a take back scheme. Also you can have your mattress collected for disposal as part of the bulky waste collection. Book and pay online at [www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste](http://www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste)

### **Medicine**

Put empty medicine bottles in your rubbish bin. Unfinished bottles of medicines or tablets

should be returned to your local chemist.

### **Microwave Ready Meal Containers**

Put the containers from microwave ready meals in your rubbish bin.

### **Milk Bottles**

Put plastic milk bottles in your recycling bin. Please wash and squash and replace lids before recycling.

### **Mirrors**

If they are intact and reusable take them to your local furniture reuse schemes – [www.durham.gov.uk/reuse](http://www.durham.gov.uk/reuse). Large mirrors can be collected as part of the bulky waste collection service – book and pay online – [www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste](http://www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste). Don't put them in your recycling bin or box.

### **Mobile Phone**

You can take your mobile phone to most charity shops, or search for a mobile phone recycling website. Mobile phones can also be recycled at the Household Waste Recycling Centres and your nearest Small Electrical Recycling Point (HWRCs do not offer secure data removal or confidentiality of data, therefore it is your responsibility to ensure your data is removed before depositing any item for recycling or reuse. Items include electrical and mobile devices as well as paper documents.)

## **N**

### **Nappies**

Put disposable nappies in your rubbish bin. You could consider using real nappies to help reduce the amount of disposal nappies being thrown away.

### **Newspapers**

Newspapers can go in your recycling bin. They can also be taken to household waste recycling centres.

## **P**

### **Paper**

Paper can be placed in your recycling bin. Paper can also be taken to the paper banks at the household waste recycling centres. Shredded paper can be added to your compost bin.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

See 'Disposable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)'

### **Pet Waste**

Waste from vegetarian pets can be safely composted. Waste from meat eating pets should be bagged and placed in your rubbish bin.

### **Phone Books**

See 'Telephone directories'.

### **Photographs**

Put photographs in your rubbish bin.

### **Pillows**

Pillows can be taken to household waste recycling centres or if you have capacity put them in



your rubbish bin.

### **Pizza Boxes (Takeaway)**

Takeaway pizza boxes should go in your rubbish bin. This is because they are often contaminated with food and grease.

### **Pizza Boxes (Supermarket)**

The cardboard outer can be recycled in your recycling bin. Put the polystyrene disc and plastic wrap in your rubbish bin.

### **Plant Pots**

Plant pots cannot be recycled in your blue-lidded recycling bin but they can be taken to household waste recycling centres and placed in the skip marked 'Plastics'

### **Plastic Bags**

See 'Carrier bags'.

### **Plastic Bottles**

Plastic bottles such as milk, drinks, washing up, shampoo, cooking oil, laundry liquid bottles etc can be put in your recycling bin. Please wash and squash bottles and replace lids (except pumps – see Lids plastic for more info) before recycling.

### **Plastic Milk Bottle Tops**

See 'Lids (plastic)'.

### **Plastic Packaging**

See Plastic pots, tubs and trays, Polythene, Polystyrene, Cling Film and Shrink Wrap.

### **Plastic Pots, Tub and Trays**

Put clean plastic packaging such as margarine and ice cream tubs, yoghurt pots in your recycling bin. Please rinse before recycling. You cannot recycle black plastic food trays.

### **Plastics (rigid)**

See 'Hard plastic'

### **Polystyrene**

Polystyrene cannot be recycled and needs to go in your rubbish bin.

### **Polythene (plastic wrapping)**

Polythene plastic wrap such as bread bags, fruit and vegetable bags, plastic-wrapped groceries, toilet-roll wrap, multi-pack shrink-wrap are not collected as part of your recycling service, but they can be recycled in the soft plastic collection points at the larger stores of most major supermarkets including Tesco, Asda, Morrisons and Sainsbury's. Check with your local supermarket. Alternatively, place polythene in your rubbish bin along with cellophane such as confectionary box overwrap and CD overwrap.

### **Postcards**

Postcards can be put in your recycling bin.

### **Pots and Pans**

Don't place them in your recycling bin. If you have any old pots and pans you can recycle them at most of the household waste recycling centres. If they are in good condition you can donate them to a local charity shop.

### **Pringle Crisp Tubes**

Pringle tubes cannot be recycled. Please put these in your rubbish bin.

## **Pyrex**

Pyrex cannot be recycled as it is heat treated glass which is different to glass bottles and jars. If you have broken Pyrex glass, wrap it carefully and put it in your rubbish bin. Pyrex dishes in good condition can be donated to a charity shop.

## **R**

### **Rubbish (household waste)**

General household waste should be separated and sorted into items that can be recycled and reused. If you take waste to a household waste recycling centre ([www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk)) you will be asked to separate your waste.

## **S**

### **Scrap Metal**

Metal items cannot go in your recycling bin. Take your scrap metal to household waste recycling centres.

### **Sheets (bedding)**

In clean/good condition – donate to local charity shops. Cut and reuse as dusters/cleaning clothes. Some animal rescue charities may accept sheets in good condition. Please check with your local animal rescue centre. Soiled sheets can be placed in your household rubbish bin as a last resort.

### **Shoes**

Please don't place them in your household bins. Sell shoes in good condition online. Unwanted shoes can either be donated to charity, taken to one of the household waste recycling centres or a recycling bring site. Remember to tie the shoes together and bag them. Check which sites accept them.

### **Shredded Paper**

Shredded paper cannot be recycled in your recycling bin. Shredded paper can be composted in your home compost bin.

### **Shrink Wrap**

Do not place Shrink Wrap in your recycling bin. Shrink Wrap can usually be recycled along with Soft Plastics at most supermarkets

### **Socks**

In clean/good condition – donate to local charities. Socks can be taken to household waste recycling centres – placed into the textile banks.

### **Soft Foam**

Foam items cannot be recycled. Put foam such as meat trays, fast food boxes, soft fruit trays and pizza discs in your rubbish bin.

### **Spectacles**

Many opticians collect unwanted spectacles for reuse in developing countries.

### **Sticking Tape/Sellotape® (on paper/card)**

There is no need to remove sticking tape from paper or card before recycling it as these will be sieved out when the material is pulped.

## T

### **Table cloths**

In clean/good condition – donate to local charities. Reuse for outdoor picnics.

### **Takeaway Food Containers**

Put plastic and aluminium takeaway food containers in your recycling bin. Please rinse before recycling. Plastic containers can be washed and reused to store food. Polystyrene containers go in the rubbish bin.

### **Tea towels**

In clean/good condition – donate to local charities.

### **Telephone Directories**

Old telephone directories can be placed in your recycling bin.

### **Televisions**

Televisions in good working order can be taken to one of the furniture reuse schemes, or they will usually collect free of charge. Broken televisions can be recycled at one of the household waste recycling centres.

### **Tetra Pak**

See 'Cartons'.

### **Textiles**

Don't place them in your recycling bin. You can give unwanted clean clothes and textiles e.g. curtains, towels or bed covers to charity shops. Local cat and dog shelters may accept old bedding and towels. They can also be taken to one of the household waste recycling centres or recycling bring sites. Check which sites accept textiles. You can also sell items online or attend Swishing clothes swap events. For more tips on recycling textiles, visit

[www.durham.gov.uk/clothesrecycling](http://www.durham.gov.uk/clothesrecycling)

### **Tins**

See 'Cans'

### **Towels**

In clean/good condition – donate to local charities. Some animal charities may accept towels. Please check local animal rescue centres.

### **Toys**

Don't place them in your recycling bin. Pass toys onto family and friends for them to enjoy. Charity shops, doctors' surgeries, play groups and hospices may accept toys and games which are in good condition. Alternatively, sell toys online.

Broken toys can be taken to the household waste recycling centres, larger toys made from hard plastic can be recycled e.g. a garden slide.

Remember to remove and recycle the batteries.

## U

### **Unaddressed Mail**

See 'Junk mail'.

### **Underwear**

In clean, hygienic and reusable condition – donate bras and tights to local charities.

## **V**

### **Vapes**

See 'E-cigarettes'

### **Vending Cups**

Put vending cups in your rubbish bin.

### **Video Tapes**

Video tapes cannot be recycled. Working VHS videos can be donated to your local charity shop. Otherwise unusable tapes will have to go into your rubbish bin.

## **W**

### **Wallpaper**

Wallpaper cannot be recycled as it is difficult to pulp and is also often contaminated with paste. If you have new, unused rolls, your local charity shop may take it. Otherwise, please place it in your rubbish bin.

### **Washing Powder Boxes**

Washing powder boxes (empty) can go in your recycling bin. Squash the boxes flat so there is more space in your bin for recycling.

### **Washing-up Liquid Bottles**

Put washing up liquid bottles in your recycling bin. Please wash and squash bottles and replace lids before recycling.

### **Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)**

Don't place electrical items in your recycling or rubbish bins. Electrical household appliances in good working order can be taken to one of the furniture reuse schemes, or they will usually collect free of charge. Broken and unwanted small electrical items can be taken to your nearest Small Electrical Recycling point or HWRC. Remember to remove and recycle batteries separately. Large electrical appliances can be recycled at one of the household waste recycling centres.

(Durham County Council does not offer secure data removal or confidentiality of data, therefore it is your responsibility to ensure your data is removed before depositing any item for recycling or reuse. Items include electrical and mobile devices as well as paper documents.)

### **Wine Glasses**

See 'Drinks glasses'

### **Wrapping Paper**

Brown wrapping paper and plain wrapping paper (without glitter or foil) can be recycled. Foil and glitter based paper cannot be recycled and should be placed in your rubbish bin.

## **Y**

### **Yellow Pages**

Put Yellow Pages in your recycling bin.

**Yoghurt Pots**

See 'Plastic pots tubs and trays'