

# Sustainable Living Guide

AUGUST | RECYCLING DOS AND DON'TS



Recycling is an earth-friendly habit that keeps our environment clean, conserves natural resources, reduces pollution and benefits the economy. And it's important we all do our part.

But are you recycling the right way? The right things? If you've ever been unsure about what should go in your recycling bin, you're not alone. Keep reading for a few essential dos and don'ts to help cut through the confusion.



## MAKE SURE YOUR RECYCLABLES ARE CLEAN, EMPTY AND DRY

Food waste contaminates 25% of recycling loads in the United States, rendering them useless and fast-tracking them to landfills.

Many recycling facilities cannot accept pizza boxes or other paper takeout containers due to grease and food waste absorbed into the product, but these items can be composted if they don't have a plastic or water-resistant coating.

## SMALL THINGS MAKE FOR BIG PROBLEMS

You shouldn't recycle anything smaller than a credit card. This includes straws, bottle caps, coffee pods, plastic cutlery, paperclips and the million other tiny things that creep into our daily lives. These objects are too small to be sorted and have a tendency to jam recycling equipment.



## KNOW YOUR PLASTICS

Not all plastics are treated equally. Rigid plastics are recyclable and can be identified with a resin code label of 1 through 7. Generally, the higher the number, the less likely it is to be recyclable. Most recycling centers will accept plastics labeled with resin code 1 and 2 without a problem. Beyond those, things get a bit trickier.

**SEE WHAT YOUR CITY RECYCLES:**

Jersey City, NJ	Tuckahoe, NY
Weehawken, NJ	Boston, MA
West New York, NJ	Malden, MA
Short Hills, NJ	

## NO PLASTIC BAGS

Plastic bags are the number-one contaminant in recycling loads. While they're technically recyclable, you must do so at a drop-off site—not your building's recycling bin. When included with regular recycling, plastic bags act as "tanglers," getting caught in machinery and ultimately shutting down equipment. However, if you throw those bags away, they can dissolve into potentially harmful microplastics and, in the case of ingestion or entanglement, even harm animals.

