



## Recycling myths busted: What can you actually recycle?

Trying to do your bit for the planet can feel like an uphill struggle. The sheer amount of items you've probably put in the recycling, thinking they'll be off to a green haven, only for them to be rejected and sent to landfill...well, it happens more often than you think.

Check out our handy list of items that will only jam up the recycling process if you put them in the wrong bin.



### Takeaway Coffee Cups

Paper coffee cups seem almost designed to be ditched in recycling bins around town. And maybe they would be, if it weren't for the plastic coating that keeps the cup waterproof. Seems obvious now, doesn't it? Coffee cups that find their way into recycling plants contaminate the process and lead to lower quality, less environmentally friendly paper. Yikes.



### Pizza Boxes

Pizza is heaven on the mouth and hell on the planet. The grease that soaks out your dough makes the box not only useless for reuse, but also actively contaminates other paper it touches during the recycling process.



### Plastic Bags

If only it were true that all plastics could be recycled. Unfortunately plastic bags like nothing more than to rip and jam recycling machinery. The only thing to do is hand your bags back to the shop for reuse or to make an ice kite out of them.



### Aerosol Cans

This one shouldn't be too surprising when you consider how combustible these things are. Even the smallest amount of paint or body spray left in an aerosol can make it hazardous during the recycling process. To make them recycle safe, ensure you've squeezed out every last drop from the can. And even then some recycling workers won't touch them...and we can hardly blame them.



### Polystyrene

It may be great for protecting your fine china when moving house, but polystyrene is death for the environment. It doesn't matter if it's moulded around your new TV or carrying your takeaway tea, polystyrene can't be recycled or biodegraded in any form.

## And a few you (surprisingly!) can



### Plastic

Well, some plastic. Not all types are the same, meaning that they can be disposed of and recycled in different ways. Milk, detergent and shampoo bottles are widely recycled, as well as many other items - so don't write all plastic off as single use. When in doubt: check the triangle.



### Carpet

Believe it or not, with its microfibres and mixed materials, carpet is primed for recycling. In fact, much of the carpet you walked on today was probably another carpet at some point in its life. So the next time you choose to expose your floorboards, don't automatically stick the



### Toothbrushes

You might think that no one's interested in your dirty old toothbrush, but actually it's made of a myriad of different materials that are useful to manufacturers in the recycling process.

Find out more

[hull.ac.uk/myplasticpledge](http://hull.ac.uk/myplasticpledge)