

Recycled Products



Most of us are now aware of the importance of recycling and the recycling facilities available in their local area – but how many of us stop to consider what happens to those glasses, cans and clothes we recycle? Recycling items is only good for the environment if that material is then created into something else that's useful instead of being thrown away. It's also important that support the recycling movement by buying, where possible, recycled products.

In this article, we'll be looking into what happens to your recycled waste, and how to go about finding and using recycled items...

What Happens to My Recycling?

It all depends on what sort of material you've recycled. Take a look at the journeys that some of your recycled items could take once you've placed them in the bottle bank or recycling bin.

Plastic Bottles

There are several ways that plastic is recycled – however usually the plastic has to be hand-sorted according to its colour and type, and is then melted down and then re-moulded. Recycled plastic can take on many new uses, including bin liners, carrier bags, DVD containers, window frames - or another plastic bottle.

Clothes

You can recycle all sorts of textile materials, including curtains, bedding, towels, handbags, cloths, rugs and mats. You can also donate your textiles in several different ways, which will usually determine where it ends up. Donating to a local charity shop could mean your unwanted clothes end up in the wardrobe of someone who does want them! Filling a recycling bag put through the door by Oxfam or another aid charity could end up benefiting those in the developing world.

Drink Cans

Aluminium cans are shredded and any coloured coating removed before being

melted down to a molten state. Here the can takes on its new life by being set, usually as another can. This process can be repeated with the material again and again. Amazingly, a used can takes only 6-8 weeks to be recycled and appear back on the shelves.

Where Can I Buy Recycled Products?

Most shops and supermarkets have caught the green bug and are stocking many recycled products on their shelves. This has brought down the price of recycled products significantly, so you shouldn't expect to automatically pay a premium for a recycled item. It's also possible to purchase recycled items directly from the people who are creating them.

Recyclenow.com, official recycling promotion website, has a dedicated shopping channel. This allows recycling companies to list their products for you to view and buy- here you can find recycled wine glasses made from reclaimed Grolsch bottles, wallets made from old belts and rugs from recycled textiles.

How do I Know If It's Recycled?

There should usually be some indication on a product's packaging to indicate if it's made from recycled materials or not. Unfortunately the use of the Recycle logo - the three arrows forming a triangle - isn't regulated by government guidelines or legislation, so you should check the small print to understand exactly how much of the product is made from recycled materials. Look for the highest percentage of post-consumer recycled content. This means you're buying materials recycled by households or individuals.

