

# COMMON RECYCLING CONTAINERS

## FACT SHEET

Recycling containers come in a variety of sizes, each generally designed to serve a specific purpose. In order to efficiently utilize these containers, there are a few general rules to follow.

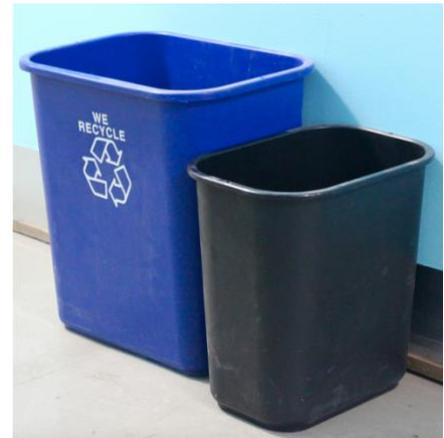
1. For every garbage container available, there should be a recycling container directly next to it. This makes recycling just as convenient as throwing a product away.
2. Recyclable and compostable material containers need to be easily differentiated from garbage containers. Each container should be clearly labeled and color-coded. The universal color for recycling containers is blue, trash containers should be either brown or black, and compost containers are green.
3. All containers should have signs that indicate which material goes where. These signs should be large and easy to read, and should incorporate images of the acceptable materials.

Below is a detailed look at how to best use the most common collection containers.

### 3.5 TO 7-GALLON BINS

- **Purpose**  
As space is usually limited, these small bins are ideal for most workplaces to collect daily garbage and recycling.
- **Location(s)**  
In an efficient waste stream, there should be one of each bin next to every desk, in every conference room, and in various small gathering places (such as waiting rooms).
- **How many?**  
Each employee receives one container for garbage and one container for recycling to keep in their workspace.

**Note:** It helps to replace same-sized garbage bins with smaller alternatives. Small garbage baskets that hang on the side of the recycling container help to free up space and remind employees that most of their waste is, indeed, recyclable.



## SLIM JIM CONTAINERS (23-GALLON)

- Purpose**  
Designed to take up minimal space, yet large enough to service heavy-traffic areas.
- Location(s)**  
Most efficient near central, shared workspaces that generate a lot of recyclables, such as printers and copy machines. Because they fit tight against the wall, Slim Jim containers are also useful for break rooms, kitchens, and cafeterias.
- How many?**  
At least one for each material being collected in common rooms with consistent traffic. Places that generate a lot of waste such as kitchens and cafeterias may require 2-4 for each material.



**Note:** Placing restrictive lids on Slim Jim containers is a good way to keep contaminating waste out. Available lids include holes for cans/bottles, or slots for paper. A lid with both a hole and slot can be for mixed recyclables.

## 32-GALLON BARRELS

- Purpose**  
35 gallon barrels are used in situations where waste generation is high, or also as mobile collection containers.
- Location(s)**  
These barrels are most useful in a central location. These barrels might not be used on a day-to-day basis by all employees, but might be wheeled in and out for larger events.
- How many?**  
Generally, only a few of these barrels are required at a given time. If being used as central collection containers, develop a plan to avoid having too many barrels taking up space.

**Note:** These barrels are bulky, but typically fit onto wheels, making them easy to move around. Restrictive lids are also available for different material types, including cans, bottles and paper.



## ROLL-CARTS

- Purpose**  
Roll-carts are generally used to collect material from smaller bins, or when waste generation is very high.
- Location(s)**  
Usually kept outside, near a loading area for easy pickups. For businesses that generate a lot of recyclables, smaller carts can be used as central recycling stations similar to barrels, and then wheeled outside for pick-up when full. Carts can be rolled into a cafeteria during lunch hours to collect compostable material.
- How many?**  
Cart needs vary widely among businesses. Your garbage collector will work with you to provide the necessary amount of carts for your specific waste stream.



## DUMPSTERS

- Purpose**  
Dumpsters are used as final collection containers in both sorted and single-stream systems. They are also good for collecting material such as scrap metal or wiring.
- Location(s)**  
In most cases, dumpsters are located on the exterior of the building near a loading area and close to an accessible door for quick dumping from smaller containers. However, non- garbage dumpsters can be appropriate inside garages, maintenance shops, etc.
- How many?**  
Your garbage collector can provide the necessary size and number of dumpsters based on your waste stream. Pickups can usually be either scheduled or called in.



**Note:** Dumpsters are available from sizes of 2-, 4-, 6-, and 8-yd<sup>3</sup>. For larger projects, dumpsters are often more desirable than roll-offs where possible because of the saved space.

## ROLL-OFFS

- **Purpose**  
Roll-offs are the largest containers available and are generally used for industrial businesses or projects that produce a considerable amount of waste.
- **Location(s)**  
Out of the way, or wherever there is available space.
- **How many?**  
The number of roll-offs you need depends on how many materials you are separating at a given time.  
This could range from one roll-off (for smaller projects) to six or seven (for larger projects).



**Note:** Roll-offs are usually available in sizes of 10-, 15-, 20-, 30-, and 40-yd<sup>3</sup>. For recycling purposes, roll-offs are best used to separate material such as cardboard, wood, scrap metal, shingles, etc., from garbage.