

# Don't Turn Your Recyclables into Garbage: Recycle Right

Your recycling skills determine whether your entire load is recycled. If you mix the wrong materials with your recyclables, they contaminate the load and it ends up in the landfill. Below are the top five problem items, and tips to help you recycle right.

## 1 Plastic Bags

These are the #1 recycling foul! Putting recyclables in plastic bags and mixing in loose bags can cause sorting machines to malfunction, shut down or catch fire.



Recycle plastic bags at grocery stores and other retail collection sites.

## 2 Glass

Not all glass is recyclable. Do not recycle window glass, drinking glasses, mirrors, dishes and cups, vases or ceramics.

- Do not mix glass with other recyclables. Broken glass is dangerous and can cause the whole load to be sent to the landfill.



Take glass to a drop-off site or ask your collector for a specific list of accepted items.

## 3 Food Waste

Food and liquids left in recyclable containers contaminate the entire load.

- Empty and rinse all containers, and try composting your food waste.



## 4 Non-recyclable Plastic

Placing non-numbered plastics, including styrofoam, in the recycling bin increases the cost of the recycling process and collection services.

- Only plastics marked #1-7 can be recycled curbside.
- Only plastics marked #1-5 are accepted at public drop-off sites.



Not sure if it's recyclable? When in doubt, throw it out!

## 5 Textiles and Apparel

Placing discarded clothing in the recycling bin increases the cost of the recycling process and collection services.



New and used items can be donated to local thrift stores.



Items that are contaminated with concentrated pesticides (i.e. agriculture pesticides) should go to Lincoln's Hazardous Waste Center. Visit [haztogo.com](http://haztogo.com) for more information.

# Where Does Your Recycling Go?



Recyclables are collected in curbside bins, apartment or business recycling containers or at public recycling drop-off sites.



Visit [recycle.lincoln.ne.gov](http://recycle.lincoln.ne.gov) to learn what you can recycle at public drop-off sites.



Private recycling collectors haul the materials to recycling processors for sorting before they are shipped to manufacturers. Ask your collector for a specific list of accepted items.



Incoming loads are scanned and sorted.



Companies use the non-contaminated recyclables to make new products, reducing the need to use raw natural resources.



## Send Your Recyclables on the Right Journey

Recyclables take many steps on their path to become new materials. Understanding this process will help avoid having your recyclables end up at the landfill.

Your recycling collector does not check the bin for incorrect items before taking it to the processors for sorting. It's up to you to recycle right and not mix in items that disrupt the process.

A helpful tip: stick to the basics which are paper, cardboard, cans, and plastic bottles and tubs. When in doubt, throw it out!



Loads with contamination



Recyclables are sent to the landfill if they are mixed with contaminants — plastic bags, broken glass, food waste, non-recyclable plastics, clothing and other textiles.

**Not sure if it's recyclable?  
When in doubt, throw it out!**