



## Eliminating Waste

### Reduce the Amount of Waste You Produce

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- Avoid bags or containers for carrying just a few items.
- Buy durable, long-lasting products like cloth or string shopping bags.
- Buy repairable products.
- Grass clippings can be returned to the lawn.
- Consider concentrated products that require less packaging.
- Consider large or economy-size for household products that are used a lot.
- Keep products in their original containers.
- Before discarding old tools, cloth or other goods, ask friends, relatives or neighbors if they can use them.
- Share newspapers and magazines with others to reduce the amount of waste paper.
- Use proper containers or plastic bags to discard paper or cardboard.
- Do not buy any product you don't need.

### Re-use as Much as Possible

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Some products are designed to be used more than once. This will help reduce the cost of managing solid waste and saves materials and resources. Here are some tips —

- Cloth napkins, sponges or dishcloths can be used around the house. They can be washed over and over again.
- Look for items that are available in refillable containers. For example, use bottles and jugs for beverages and detergents that are made to be refilled and reused.
- When using single items, take only what is needed. For example, take only one napkin or ketchup packet if more are not needed.
- Before discarding bags, containers or other items, consider if they are hygienic and practical to use again.
- Keep a supply of bags on hand to use on the next shopping trip.
- Save and reuse gift boxes, ribbons and large pieces of wrapping paper.
- Save egg cartons and other items for re-use or for arts and crafts projects.
- Wash and re-use empty glass and plastic jars. These containers can be used to

store leftovers, as well as buttons, nails and thumbtacks.

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**Never store anything potentially harmful in containers designed for food or beverages.**

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## **Recycling. Use it!**

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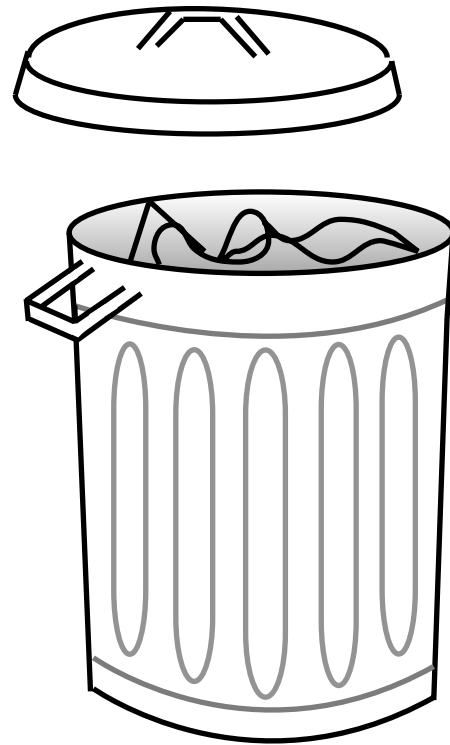
Recycling is the process by which materials are collected and used as new materials for new products. If there are collection sites, take your recyclable items to those places. There are many packages and products that can be recycled.

- Consider products made of materials that are collected for recycling locally. This includes glass, aluminum, steel, some paper and cardboard, and certain plastics.
- Participate in community recycling drives.
- Take used car batteries, antifreeze and motor oil to participating automobile service centers. Don't throw them away.
- If you have leftover paints, ask relatives, friends or neighbors if they have any use for them.

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**Call a local recycling center to find out how materials should be separated and sorted.**

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## **Waste Collection**

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- Put waste containers in different areas of your house to collect the trash.
- Remove trash regularly.
- Find out the waste collection day in your area and take the trash containers to the collection area.
- Be sure that the trash and waste are in appropriate containers to avoid pets and rodents messing them up.

*This factsheet was originally developed by Nayda I. Torres, Associate Professor, Family and Consumer Economics, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. The material has been adapted for use in Tennessee by Martha Keel, Associate Professor, Family and Consumer Sciences – Housing and Environmental Health.*

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