



WHAT MORE CAN WE RECYCLE?

Or - how to reduce your family rubbish to two tiny bags!

Or - three cheers for our local supermarkets! And Boots and Superdrug!

With so many new options for recycling opening, I've done some research to see what else we can save from the tip.

SOFT PLASTIC

Many supermarkets now offer to recycle scrunchy soft plastic, so I contacted the Council about possible kerbside collections. They have no current plans because, from 2023, the extended producer responsibility for packaging will come into force which they expect to reduce the amount of single use plastic.

Soft plastic can still be recycled locally, however, for example at [Sainsbury's](#) (orange plastic bag bins) and [the Co-op](#) (containers by the counters).

If the bin is full at Sainsbury's, you can take to customer services. The Co-op bins are by the counters so you can get help from the staff.

Listed items for recycling are:

- Bag-type items (e.g. bread bags, dried fruit, cereal box inners)
- Film lids from single-use containers (e.g. fruit, raw meat, ready meals). This also includes scrunchy plastic yoghurt lids
- Packet wrap, (e.g. biscuits, crisp packets – at last!)
- Fruit mesh (just the mesh, not the metal clasp or label)
- Film wrap from cut flowers
- Odd bits of scrunchy soft plastic like wrappers from sticking plasters and individually wrapped chewy sweets (although these can be very sticky and not worth washing!)

Household tip

It's OK if any of the above have paper stickers on them but they do need to be clean.

I rinse mine at the end of a batch of washing up. Bags can be part-filled with water, given a bit of a shake, and everything seems to come out ok when the water is tipped out (even cereal dust!).

It does mean an annoying pile of wrappers builds up on the countertop, and they do need to spend a bit of time on the draining rack, but the smug glow of keeping them from landfill trumps my dislike of the extra periodic mess.

Any suggestions on ways to manage this would be gratefully received though!

Co-op going the extra mile

The Co-op are also taking mixed-film-and-paper, which they incinerate for power, opening up a huge additional avenue. This doesn't need to be separated from the plain plastic so it's an easy jump.

So, you no longer need to bin:

- ❑ Jiffy bags – the bubble-wrap kind. (The shredded cardboard ones should go with your cardboard recycling)
- ❑ Fruit mesh labels (Sainsbury's can't take the labels)
- ❑ Plastic packaging tape (a small amount is manageable for the cardboard recycling, but they prefer it to be removed)
- ❑ Combination plastic-and-metallic sweet wrappers from selection tubs, e.g. Celebrations
- ❑ Plasticky present/flower ribbon (the metallic, curly kind, not fabric ribbon)
- ❑ Sealed covers from under the screw-on lids on milk, and across contact lens blister packs.
- ❑ Paper stock cube wrappers (yes, I've even asked about those!)
- ❑ Note that they CAN'T take pill blister packs, e.g. from paracetamol, as these are laminated with foil which won't incinerate. Weirdly the foil-and-plastic sweet wrappers seem to be ok!

Co-op Instagram team

I'm now on first-name terms with the above, so if you have any other suggestions for mixed-soft-plastics which you aren't quite sure about then let me know and I'll enquire and update the blog!

Other supermarkets

I haven't researched any other supermarkets as I don't use them personally, so while their websites may say they offer recycling, I wouldn't want to send you to their stores to be disappointed. Please do circulate the information if you know other local supermarkets providing soft plastic recycling.

You might say...

'I can't cope with another recycling box in my kitchen, this is getting ridiculous...'

All the soft plastic does generate another whole bin's-worth of waste, and who has space for another bin? There are other options, though.

- ❑ **On display:** As it's all clean and squashes down small, we are using a nice-looking, lidded cannister. We use toilet-roll, crisp multipack, and other largish bags as a liner and when they're well-stuffed we take the full bag round to Co-op. We do generate a lot of this type of waste, so our cannister needs to be pretty massive, but if you are less avid crisp-eaters, then something the right size for a bread bag should take a week or two's worth of waste.
- ❑ **Out of sight:** You could also put them straight into your shopping bags, if you keep these in the house (again, as they're clean this should be ok).



HOLEY SOCKS AND OTHER UNSALEABLE FABRICS

The Council used to take these things and get them recycled, but this is no longer the case. If you have clothing, you know can't be re-worn, take them to Oxfam as they receive money by weight for this type of fabric, which is reused by specialist industries. Or a jumble sale might be an alternative.

TOOTHPASTE AND MAKEUP PACKAGING

Boots are offering a recycling service and will give you Advantage Card points if you bring things in to store recycling points. They ask for anything that could go in your council waste to be recycled in that way. They will take things that are:

- Too small for council recycling (travel minis, samples, mascaras, etc.)
- Made of composite materials (make-up palettes, compacts, lipsticks, etc.)
- Made from non-recyclable materials (toothpaste tubes, lotion pumps, etc.)

Superdrug also offers recycling for empty:

- Foundation bottles, concealer tubes, powder, and blusher
- Mascaras, mascara brushes, eyeliner, and eyeshadow palettes
- Lipsticks, glosses and balms
- Other packaging – caps, pumps and sprays

So, very similar to Boots, but not toothpaste, so be aware.

I hope this is useful!

Last week our fortnightly collection from a household of 4 was two tiny bags, mostly comprising tissues, packet soup wrappers and dental floss, so this does make a genuine difference.

Let me know how you do.

Bryony Hitchcock: Member of Holy Trinity Church Combe Down

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