



Nestlé®

Jó étellel teljes az élet



# HOW TO BE AN ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS CONSUMER

Ideas for sustainable living



The main purpose of food packaging is to protect product quality and ensure product safety until the best before and use by dates, therefore, packaging materials are always made to fit product characteristics, storage and transportation requirements. Packaging also provides relevant information to consumers about the ingredients, nutritional value and origin of the product.

## WHY DOES FOOD NEED PACKAGING?



A record amount of packaging waste per capita was generated in Europe in 2017.

- **Appropriate protection** against various ambient (watering, moulding, contamination, light, etc.) and physical (breaking, crushing) impacts.
- **Method and conditions of transport and storage** No matter how short the supply chain is, the products are exposed to countless impacts on their way from the factory through the stores to consumer tables.
- **Product safety:** Food must remain suitable for consumption until the best before and use by dates displayed on its packaging. Moreover, the packaging material must also be safe and secure: it must not break or crack, no pieces of it may get into the product and it may not react with the food in it.
- **Product information** required by regulations and important for consumers, such as ingredients, allergens, place of origin, nutritional value, best before and use by dates are also printed on the packaging.
- **Sustainability:** Producers endeavour to make as much of packaging as possible from recycled materials, however, not all packaging containing recycled materials is suitable for coming into contact with food.

### Layers and roles of packaging

1. Has direct contact with the product and protects it from ambient effects (humidity, oxidation, foreign matter, etc.).
2. Protects the product from mechanical impacts and provides relevant information to consumers.
3. Protects the product during its transport from the factory to and storage at logistics centres.



### Plastic is not an enemy



**Plastic** is an easy to use, user-friendly packaging material that is often more hygienic and, from a food safety aspect, more serviceable than other materials, so food industry uses multiple types of plastics as packaging. Naturally, the majority of plastics is recyclable only if the appropriate technology is available in the given country and consumers collect waste selectively. Read about this in detail on pages 10-11.

There are very few types of recycled plastics now that comply with food safety requirements and hence would be hygienically suitable for food-grade applications. In 2020, Nestlé appropriated nearly CHF 2 billion to develop recycled plastic packaging to comply with food safety requirements and thereby significantly reduce the amount of virgin plastics used in its packaging.

### Paper, glass, metal

Other packaging materials, similarly to plastics, also have their own advantages.



**Glass** has very good barrier properties against humidity and oxygen, its weight and rigidity, however, make it more dangerous and prone to damage during production, transport and sale. It is 100% recyclable almost indefinitely, without quality deterioration. This makes it suitable for recycling into a packaging material (see page 16 for details).



**Aluminium** provides perfect protection against humidity, oxygen and light, keeping the product fresh for a long time and retaining the flavour of food and beverages. It is used extensively in the food industry mostly as coffee capsules, canned food and beverages, and aluminium foil. It is highly durable and is infinitely recyclable, therefore, it can be kept in the cycle for a long time. In most cases, a polymer based coating is applied to aluminium packaging to prevent it from reacting with the product within. This sometimes makes recycling more difficult.



**Paper- and fibre-based** packaging has a high degree of permeability and it does not protect against ambient impacts on its own. For this reason, they are mostly used as commercial or logistics packaging, sometimes laminated with other materials. It is recycled almost everywhere in the world (read about it on page 17), however, this causes a certain degradation of quality.



**Multi-material** packaging such as Tetra Pak milk and beverage cartons provide complex protection. They can also be collected separately and must always be disposed of according to local guidelines (i.e. disposed of as paper or plastic, depending on the provider).

The above benefits are the reason Nespresso coffee capsules are made from aluminium and why they have been reclaimed by Nestlé in Hungary as well for some years.

Aluminium and coffee grounds are separated in the waste stream during recycling, and aluminium is reborn as everyday objects – pens, cans or bicycle frames.



DID YOU KNOW?

In addition to businesses, legislators and regulatory authorities, consumers can also do a lot to reduce our environmental impact on the planet as conscious consumer behaviour does not merely help prevent harmful environmental effects but can also guide companies in the right direction. While there is increased talk about sustainable living and sustainable transport, most of us regularly replenish the family supplies in the midst of the daily bustle without actually taking the time to think over our consumer decisions.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A CONSUMER?

The majority of household waste comes from food packaging, therefore, the Circular Economy Package of the European Union set the goal to have 75% of packaging waste and 65% of household waste recyclable by 2030.

### Do you ask for a plastic bag?

You actually can influence how much and what type of plastics you use. For example, you can influence production as a consumer – after all, your demand will affect the supply in stores. Avoid disposable plastic bags that rip easily. Use recyclable packaging or packaging made of recycled materials instead and bring your own tote bags and storage containers whenever you can.

### Which packaging size to choose?

The advantage of single portion packaging for one serving is that less food waste is produced, which may contribute to cutting back on food wastage, while often proportionally less packaging is used for large family packs. Whenever you go shopping for food, consider the actual needs of your family to find the optimal solution in terms of the amount of packaging used and the availability of selective collection.

### Get to know the producers.

Take your time to know about the brands and products. Don't make decisions based on emotions, but check the ingredients, find out more about the producer's activities and the circumstances of production.

### Read the labels!

Look out for the labels of various certification and other supporting organisations (Grown Respectfully, Rainforest Alliance, Cocoa Plan, etc.), because you can support sustainable farming and production by purchasing such marked products. Ask questions and give feedback to producers to support their activities.



### Why are reusable vegetable bags good?

It is worth wondering how many disposable plastic bags customers take from the dispensers daily when they collect their produce in separate bags at the stores. Now, multiply this by 129,000 – as according to the 2017 data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH), there are 129,000 retail units in Hungary.\* Put your fruits, vegetables and also your bakery goods in reusable bags next time you go shopping for food. Reusable bags are available at all SPAR and INTERSPAR stores.

### Silicone stretch lids

If you stock up on some reusable silicone stretch lids you may safely buy sour cream, yoghurt or kefir without a plastic lid on, because SPAR introduced these smart lids in all its stores all over Hungary to replace disposable plastic lids.

### Apples from South America?

Opt for fruit and vegetables in season in your region. They don't have to cross the ocean to reach your table.

You can avoid a lot of plastic if you opt for no bags or mesh bags when picking your produce at the store. For example, SPAR has saved **1 tonne of plastic** a year in

Hungary by replacing plastic packaging and introducing mesh bags for apples.

\*Source: <https://www.portfolio.hu/gazdasag/20171102/egyre-kevesebb-a-bolt-magyarorszagon-266779>



DID YOU KNOW?

# FOOD WASTAGE

About 1.8 million metric tonnes of food waste is produced in Hungary every year, most of which could be avoided. Approximately one third of this food waste comes from households, therefore, it is the joint responsibility of all members of the food chain, including consumers to take part in the efforts for reducing food wastage. Discarded food is not only money lost for families, but also has a major environmental impact as the production, transport and destruction of products is very energy intensive, increasing GHG emissions and driving global warming.

Roughly 4.4 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent harmful gas is emitted globally as a result of food waste decomposition every year. By way of a popular metaphor: if food waste was a country, it would be the #3 global GHG emitter behind China and the USA.\*

## How can you save food?

Always write a shopping list before going to the food store and always buy what is really necessary. Look out for the **best before** and **use by** dates of products, and always consume or use the ones with the closer date.

### Best before

is used on products that pose no risk if consumed beyond the indicated date. Non-perishable foods bearing this mark **may be consumed after their expiry date** if stored in their original unopened packaging and in conditions specified by the producer. These products typically include chocolate, instant soups, bottled sauces and breakfast cereals.

### Use by

on the other hand shows the date until the given food product must be consumed, because beyond such date it may be harmful to health on account of the undesirable microbiological changes in it even if you observe the specified storage requirements. Perishable food products such as dairy (souring, curdling), bakery goods and confectionery (ropiness, moulding, fermentation) or fresh meat (unpleasant smell, sliminess, or visible gas generation in prepackaged products) often bear this mark on their packaging.

A survey conducted in 2018 tested whether consumers can differentiate between food with long and short use by dates just by using their senses. The results showed that the majority of participants did not observe any significant difference between two identical products that differed only in their expiry dates. This survey goes to show that you can do a lot to reduce waste if you buy products whose expiry dates are nearer. The survey was conducted with the participation of SPAR in Hungary.

\*Source: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bb144e.pdf>

## What is the food waste that can and cannot be eliminated?

Certain plant and animal parts (egg shell, pits, bones, etc.) are not suitable for human consumption, so they inevitably end up as refuse. Most food waste, however, could be prevented by proper storage or keeping the expiry date in mind.



According to the study published by the National Food Chain Safety Office (Nébih) **48.7% of food waste could be avoided** through conscious consumer behaviour. This corresponds to 33.14 kg/person/year.\*\*



**The greatest part of avoidable food waste comes from leftovers from cooked food**, followed by various bakery products.

## Donations

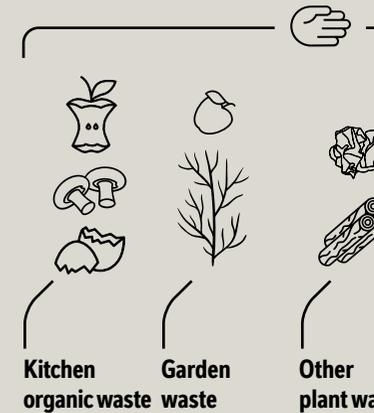
Retail chains and food producers have numerous opportunities to donate unsold food products to organisations specialising in the distribution of food donations.

## Composting

Food that is unsuitable for human consumption becomes waste. Composting is an environmentally friendly option that lets micro- and macroorganisms break down separately collected organic waste. The end product of this process is compost, a material full of valuable nutrients for plants.

\*\*Source: <https://portal.nebih.gov.hu/~maradek-nelkui-program-kutatasi-eredmenyek-oszefoglalasa>

### What to compost?

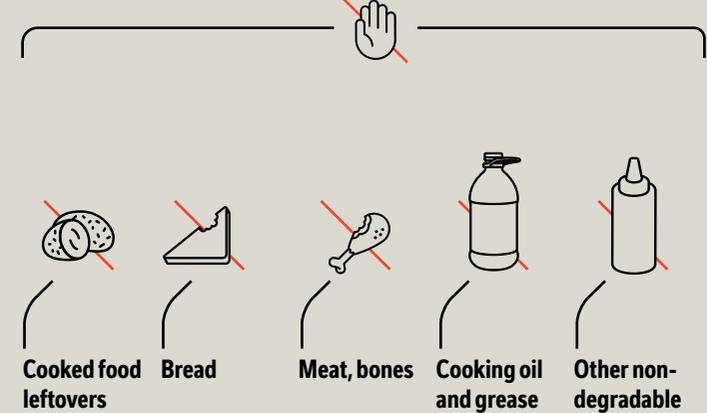


**Kitchen organic waste**  
fruit, vegetable and potato peels, egg shells (crushed), coffee grounds, tea from teabags (not the bag itself), withered flowers

**Garden waste**  
fallen fruit and vegetables, small branches, twigs, foliage, grass clippings, garden weed

**Other plant waste in small amounts**  
untreated shredded wood, paper

### What not to compost?



**Cooked food leftovers**  
Its consistency makes it break down differently and may cause rotting.

**Bread**

**Meat, bones**

**Cooking oil and grease**

**Other non-degradable substances**

» You can find more useful information on composting at [komposztalj.hu](http://komposztalj.hu).



Find out what you can do to help make a difference in our environment every day. Whether you're at home or at school, there are many opportunities to go green by Reducing, Reusing, and Recycling.

## HOW CAN WE REDUCE WASTE?

### Reduce

The key to zero waste is **to prevent and reduce waste**. In the course of environmentally conscious product design (ecodesign) responsible manufacturers consider the environmental impacts throughout the product life cycle to reduce the environmental footprint of the products as much as possible. Whenever you buy food or beverages, you should consider the whole life of a product – from the production of raw materials to the recycling of the product – to assess its actual environmental impact or so-called environmental footprint, and consequently make the appropriate decision. Buy only what you really need and do not throw away old, but still usable items.

### Reuse

**Reusing of products** may be an efficient method of extending their life as an increasing number of products and packages are designed and produced with a view to making them reusable again and again. A way of reusing packaging is to collect them from consumers; for example, returning coloured glass bottles for a deposit. Naturally, filling used and washed jars with homemade jam also counts towards reuse.

### Recycle

**Recycling** is recovering and reusing the waste material as such. In this procedure waste materials are separated and processed as secondary raw materials and converted into new products of the same or completely different functionality. The raw materials and technologies available are to be discussed in more detail (see page 14-15).

This is how recycled plastic granules look like.



**Recycling process of selectively collected PET bottles: plastics are crushed and shredded, then the granules produced are used for making new PET bottles.**

Recycling extends the life of plastics. Since using secondary raw materials requires less primary raw materials, less waste is generated. High quality PET

bottles can be turned into new bottles, foil, planter boxes, or polyester thread for clothes and carpets. Packaging or products that get in contact with food (so-called food contact materials) can only be made from waste with the appropriate quality properties. The majority of recycled PET products are still used in the textile industry.



DID YOU KNOW?

DID YOU KNOW?

### What to do with laminates (e.g. soup sachet)?

#### Why can't they be recycled?

They are so-called composite packaging materials, which means that diverse constituent materials are combined in their production. Their subsequent separation is economically and technologically not viable, therefore, they cannot be recycled as plastic or metal, and consequently must be disposed with mixed (communal) waste.

#### Why do I need to remove the caps before disposing the bottles, if the caps are also plastic?

In most cases caps are made of different plastics, therefore a different technology is used to process them.



## WHAT GOES IN WHAT BIN?\*

\* Certain types of waste (e.g. sheet glass, Styrofoam) must be taken to waste collection yards. You should inquire with the local public service provider.

### Paper waste

Newspapers, magazines, books, clean wrapping paper, cardboard boxes, note books, corrugated paper, office paper waste, directories, leaflets, advertising publications. **In Budapest, Tetra Pak® packaging solutions (e.g. milk and fruit juice) are also collected here.** The plastic spouts need not be removed, you should only put the cap among the plastic waste.

### Plastic and metal waste

**Plastic:** mineral water, refreshment, etc. PET bottles rinsed and crushed, removed caps of these, rinsed sour cream and yoghurt pots, uncontaminated plastic bags (e.g. punched pockets), foils, bubble wrap, washed out plastic bottles (e.g. shampoo, washing liquid), plastics with PET, HDPE, LDPE, PP marking and some PS marking (see page 12-13). **Metal:** washed out and crushed cans (e.g. pet food), refreshment and beer metal and aluminium cans, tinfoil, metal lids and caps (e.g. baby food, canned products), cutlery, paper clips, stapler pins.\*\*

### Coloured glass waste

**Coloured hollow glass:** wine bottles, champagne bottles, beer bottles, liquor bottles.

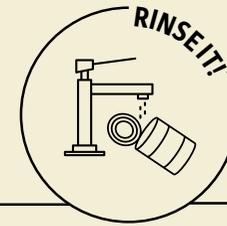
### White glass waste

**Transparent hollow glass:** conserve jar, baby food jars, bottles (wine, liquor, etc.).

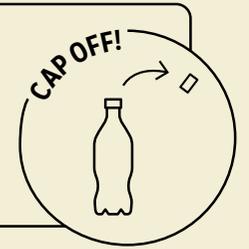
\*\* Where grey and yellow bins are installed, plastic and metal are collected separately. If there is only a yellow bin, the two materials are collected together.

## Watch what you do...

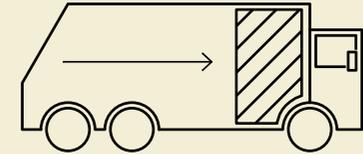
Always **rinse** the greasy materials before recycling.



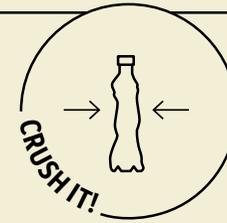
Always put the PET bottles in the selective bin **without caps or lids.**



**Up to 75% of the body of garbage trucks could be freed,** if everybody disposed of their bottles crushed or folded.



Always **crush** the disposed cardboard boxes and PET bottles.



**Never use a plastic bag** to collect your paper waste for recycling.



### What cannot be collected in the selective bins?

Greasy or contaminated paper, paper with food waste (e.g. pizza box), thermal paper (bill, receipt), transport tickets, fax paper, used sanitary paper (tissue paper, napkin, sanitary pad), nappies, plastic covers and other compound materials, or plastic coated paper packaging such as takeaway coffee cups.



Cassettes, tapes, CD, plastic toys, toothbrush, metal coated foils (e.g. crisps bags), foam trays, Styrofoam, unrinsed plastic and metal cans contaminated with food waste or chemicals, drug blister packs. So-called degradable plastics must not be collected with other plastics.



Sheet glass (window panes, mirrors), lightbulbs, glasses, neon tubes, heat resistant glassware, chinaware, ceramics and bottles containing hazardous materials.



The symbols on the packaging help you understand the environmental footprint of the product and help us identify how different types of packaging can be recycled.

## HOW DOES PACKAGING HELP IN COLLECTING WASTE SEPARATELY?



The triangle of three arrows looping back on themselves known as the **Mobius Loop** simply means that the product can be recycled. This does NOT mean at all that the product was made of recyclable material or that recycling will definitely take place as the latter requires having the appropriate recycling and selective waste collection system in place and in use. If you see a percentage value and a material mark in the loop, it indicates how many percent of the product is made of recycled raw material and which part of the packaging this applies to.



The **Green Dot** mark is the trademark of the European Extended Producer Responsibility focusing on waste collection, sorting and recycling solutions, and is used on the packaging of producers who made a financial contribution to waste recovery and recycling. This is not an environmental label or statement by itself.



The **Tidyman** mark draws attention to avoid littering, putting your waste in the appropriate containers. It can only be used on packaging that is not recyclable. It cannot be used together with the Mobius Loop.

### How much of the "100% degradable" claims on packaging is true?

When it comes to degradable packaging, the label must indicate the part and percentage of the packaging that breaks down within the time and under the conditions specified in international standards. "100% degradable" claims, therefore, are always suspicious as it is very unlikely that all parts of packaging fully breaks down considering the length of time and conditions provided.

### What should I do if a packaging is made of diverse raw materials or consist of parts with different levels of recyclability?

If packaging is made of two or more types of plastics, it is sometimes – but not always – indicated on the packaging. For example, if the plastic packaging of wet wipes displays PIC 7, while the dispensing lid on these wipes display PIC 5, the packaging must be taken apart: the recyclable part should be put in the selective container and the non-recyclable part in the municipal waste bin. If you cannot take it apart, the packaging unfortunately qualifies as mixed waste and must be disposed of in the municipal waste bin.



DID YOU KNOW?

## Recycling statements and claims on packaging:

These are possibly the most important for consumers as they clarify how to treat packaging. These statements declare which part(s) of the packaging is recyclable (and whether it must be separated from other parts of the packaging). These statements are printed on the packaging if selective collection and recycling is available for the relevant materials. They may feature together with the Mobius Loop. E.g. this way:



With text: "This packaging is made of recyclable paper."



Similarly, if a product is made of recycled raw materials, the percentage of such materials must always be indicated on the packaging. This information, however, does not indicate which waste collection bin you should put the used packaging in.

## Which plastics are recyclable?

The type of plastic used in the packaging determines whether it can be recycled. Not all types of plastics have their dedicated recycling technology developed, or maybe the infrastructure for collecting and subsequent sorting a specific type of waste is not established, but it may also happen that processing is not profitable or not viable due to the properties of the material. The numbers in the arrowed triangle on the packaging solely indicate the type of plastic resin used for the product or the packaging. This is the so-called PIC (Packaging Identification Code) that classifies seven types of plastics.

Be careful! Only the following green materials are recyclable. The red ones are not!



1 – PET – polyethylene terephthalate

2 – HDPE/PE-HD – high density polyethylene

3 – PVC – polyvinyl chloride

4 – LDPE/PE-LD – low density polyethylene

5 – PP – polypropylene

6 – PS – polystyrene  
Except EPS (Expanded polystyrene)

7 – OTHER

Plastics marked 3, 7 and EPS (Expanded polystyrene) do not go together with other recycled plastic material

Packages are often labelled with an additional C (certain material remark). This indicates that the packaging is made of a different types of material.



Flexible packaging (films, foils, wrappers and bags) can be made of a variety of materials. Combined multi-layer packaging that ensure appropriate protection are used most frequently, however, they are difficult to recycle. A key and pressing challenge for food industry businesses is to switch to simpler monopolymer (primarily PP and PE) solutions for packaging.

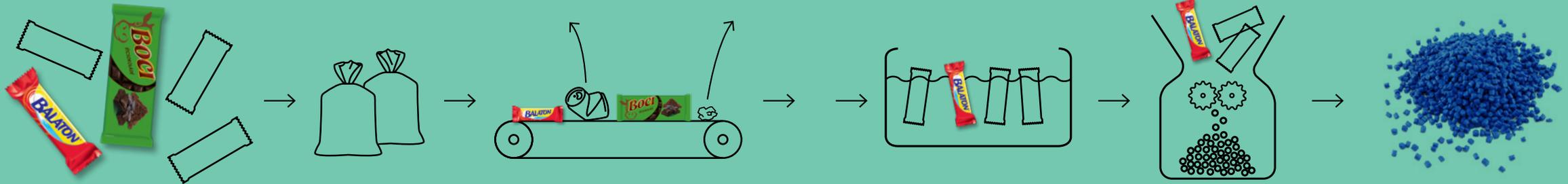
At certain points of the separation process infrared identification technology is used instead of manual sorting, as the latter cannot always screen potential contamination

and dark packaging materials. This is why consuming and using products in dark (purple, black) packaging should be avoided even if the packaging is theoretically recyclable.



DID YOU KNOW?

## HOW IS WASTE RECYCLED?



### Waste

The most frequent method of recycling is the so-called mechanical recycling. This means cleaning, remelting and upgrading plastic waste. This includes automated processes like grinding, rinsing and washing, sorting, drying, regranulation and forming.

### Collection

Collect only those of the seven types of plastics in a selective container that can be recycled in the scope of residential selective waste collection schemes (1 – PET, 2 – HDPE, 4 – LDPE, 5 – PP, 6 – PS, (except for EPS!)). See page 12-13.

### Sorting

Incoming plastic waste streams are first sorted manually. Other waste – primarily metal which could damage the processing equipment – is removed from among the plastic waste. Paper contamination is sometimes sorted by screens and fans, which can also remove light components (e.g. foils). Plastics are separated both by rigidity and – to improve the quality of the recycled product – colour. Finally, the various types of plastic have to be separated.

### Washing, cleaning

Labels, caps and lids are removed, and are all surface contaminants through soaking. Foils and films like chocolate wrapper may pose a challenge to recycling due their rather high degree of contamination with food and light weight, as it is not financially viable to clean and recycle them unless it is done in large batches.

### Grinding, pressing

Cleaned, ground plastic is first melted, then pressed, made into filaments and finally turned into granules of a few millimetres in diameter, called regranulate.

### Use of the regranulate

Regranulate made from PE and PP film packaging are usually used to produce bags and garbage bags of varying thickness. In compliance with the regulations of the European Food Safety Authority, rPP and rPE (recycled PP and PE) may not be used as packaging in food grade applications. In parallel with the development of various technologies, such as chemical and solvent recycling, the application possibilities and risks of rPP and rPE are tested constantly to make them suitable for food grade packaging, but only in a way that is completely harmless to health.

Throughout the entire supply chain, the largest amount of greenhouse gases that drive global warming is generated by the production of **agricultural raw materials**.

Contrary to common belief, **packaging** has a lower environmental impact.



DID YOU KNOW?



**Although glass recycling has multiple benefits, it has unfortunately remained out of the focus of the eco-revolution of recent years. At the moment, paper and plastic recycling have clear priority in Hungary, although glass is a particularly good raw material.**

## GLASS RECYCLING

### Environmental footprint

It may not be widely known, but recycling glass has a much lower energy requirement than producing virgin glass: while the latter requires 1,300 °C, it is sufficient to heat glass to just 900 °C for recycling, so the environmental impact and the carbon footprint is less on the whole; moreover, the quality of recycled glass is perfect, contrary to many other materials.

### Simple processing, short product path

Glass is practically 100% recyclable if various colours of glass waste can be separated. After sorting and separation, bottles, jars and other containers are crushed, their metal components are removed by magnets, with the crushed glass melted then recast into new forms for the packaging industry.

The less glass waste is disposed in communal waste, the less the impact is on the environment and the economy. A returnable bottle, for example, can be refilled 40 times on average.

### Recycling

Optimising residential waste does not only require the raising of awareness among consumers, but the availability of relevant infrastructure. Door-to-door selective waste collection is a good example. This initiative made paper and plastics collection rates shoot up.

In comparison, glass may be disposed at collection points and yards or points of sales – such as at SPAR and INTERSPAR stores – in a way that you can be sure that it will be not end in a landfill.



## PAPER FROM WOOD

### Waste is not rubbish, but an opportunity

This saying particularly applies to materials which are just as valuable in their natural as their processed form. Trees are valuable assets that must be protected, not only because they give a cool shade, but also oxygen that is vital for all life, so it is in our own best interest to be prudent when using materials made from wood.

### Ecological footprint

Since paper is a natural raw material that decomposes relatively fast, however, producing paper from wood requires substantial water consumption that has several consequences on the environment. Producing 1 tonne of paper requires 2-3.5 tonnes of wood. Logging reduces the natural habitat of animals and if we are not careful, we may also upset the ecological balance.

Moreover, logging for paper production can unfortunately give rise to desertification and increased soil erosion, not to mention hidden consequences like the discharge of – chemically treated – water used for bleaching wood pulp.

The certification system developed by the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) enables the identification of the raw material of certain products made from wood, whether or not it derived from responsibly managed forests and farms.

### Technological development

Brands committed to environmental protection are fielding a range of innovations to protect our planet. For example, SPAR has achieved increasingly good results with recycled paper: the volume of annually recycled cardboard and paper waste increased by almost 25%, from 12,000 to nearly 15,000 tonnes from 2014 to 2018. Recycled paper is primarily used as packaging.

People are more aware of paper and plastic recycling than hazardous waste, even though the disposal of the latter is exceptionally important, due to the substances dangerous to health and to the environment; additionally, certain types of products are just as easy to recycle as glass.

## EVEN HAZARDOUS WASTE CAN BE RECYCLED

### Batteries

Batteries and accumulators contain a large amount of heavy metals and toxic substances, which makes it critical from an environmental perspective as well to not allow them to end up in soil or groundwater. Their recycling is an expensive process, but up to 90% of raw materials can be regained in certain cases. This rate is 50-60% for non rechargeable energy sources (like conventional batteries). In the first step of the process batteries are heated and deoxidised. When they are cooled back down, the metals precipitate and are recovered to be reused in industry.

#### What you can do

Look for collection points at major stores, educational institutions and municipalities. If you cannot find a collection point nearby, ask for help on how to request one to be established. In addition to collection points, you can also dispose hazardous waste during annual citywide cleanup or at waste yards.

### Light tubes

The recycling process of light sources is much simpler, the mercury content of the products calls for extra care, however. The first step is to remove the glass parts from metal and plastic, then grind the separated fractions. Lamp waste recycling generates 80-90% glass, 7-14% metal and plastics, and less than 0.1% mercury. These materials can all be reused in diverse areas, from metallurgy to glass production.

### Electronic waste

Electronic waste is the most problematic on our list as it almost invariably contains some substance that is highly dangerous to health and the environment, such as lead, cadmium or bromine. Electronic waste amounts to 70% of all hazardous waste globally, and unfortunately ends up in landfills or incinerators in most cases. It is particularly important for the above reasons that our electronic devices reach the sites where they are disposed appropriately, which may even make some of their parts recyclable.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Is it true that refuse collectors dump carefully separated waste anyway?

Perhaps this is the most frequent argument against selective waste collection. Waste companies do NOT dump separately collected waste together, however; it is not in their interest, because they generate their income from recyclable materials. In most places, split body garbage trucks are used for waste removal. Where this is not an option, materials of different kinds are collected in bags and they always undergo subsequent separation.

What should I do with so-called degradable packaging?

Biodegradable plastic packaging can turn into carbon dioxide, water and organic matter under the appropriate ambient conditions (temperature, humidity, etc.). Household composters cannot ensure such conditions, so these materials can only be decomposed in an industrial environment. At the same time, they should not be disposed together with selective plastic waste, either, because there are no facilities for the residential collection and utilisation of biodegradable plastics in Hungary. There are oxo-degradable plastics that in fact only break down into microparticles in a certain time in the presence of oxygen. As of 2021, their sale has been prohibited in the EU. Consequently, bioplastics are not a real alternative, so in summary, it is best if you do not use them. Read about this in detail at [humusz.hu](http://humusz.hu).

Why isn't all plastic packaging made of recyclable material?

The recyclability of materials always depends on economy as well as the available technologies and infrastructure. As of summer 2021, the European Union bans the sale of certain disposable plastics, primarily those where there are already best practices to replace them (e.g. cotton buds, straws, balloon sticks, plastic cutlery and plates). The aim of the ban is to motivate manufacturers and businesses to establish the foundations and conditions of a circular economy.

What's with multi-material cold cut and cheese trays?

Unfortunately, in most cases the exact type of plastic they are made of is not known, consequently their recycling is not solved, either. If you are uncertain whether they are recyclable, put them in the selective container. Worst case scenario, they are removed during subsequent sorting.

What can I leave at the waste yard?

Waste yards are there to receive large quantities of plastic, paper, metal and glass waste. You can dispose your hazardous waste and waste requiring special treatment here: small and large electric appliances, used cooking oil, light tubes and other luminaires, dry cell batteries and small accumulators. You should check beforehand what exactly you can dispose of at the waste yard as this may change periodically.\*

**Packaging is an integral part of the product. It protects the contents, informs consumers and the participants of the commercial process. Commercial multipacks remain at the stores, where they are collected selectively before taken back by goods supply trucks and lorries to the logistics centres as returns. They are baled and removed for recycling. A great advantage of packaging waste generated in production facilities and commercial premises is that it is available in larger volumes than packaging from residential waste collection.**

## WHAT HAPPENS TO PACKAGING IN COMMERCE?



Since 2018, no industrial waste has been disposed in a landfill from Nestlé factories in Hungary, as all of it is either recycled or utilised as energy.

Not recyclable =  
useless?

Since waste management is a multi-stage process, it has a multitude of by-products with an uncertain fate. Unrecyclable, nevertheless useful materials may be produced at the end of the process. One of them is RDF, as in refuse-derived fuel, which is a high calorific value fuel that can be used in power plants and factories. Although its undisputed advantage is that it replaces fossil fuels, its utilisation also comes with a high amount of GHG emission; consequently, the ultimate goal in the long run is to reduce or avoid such waste.

The journey  
of packaging

Whatever you buy, you do not just take the product home with you, but the responsibility of disposing the packaging as well. If you help retail chains in collecting reusable waste, your decisions as a responsible consumer also express that it is an important matter. SPAR, for example, has collected three times more paper waste collectively with consumers than it used for its private label products, and also ensured the recycling of collected paper waste. According to 2018 data, the 95% collection and recycling rate of plastic film packaging waste is also quite remarkable.\*

Is packaging-free  
food viable?

Food industry businesses are also working on using the least possible packaging or, where the relevant local regulations and requirements allow, completely eliminate it. Alternative refill solutions, where consumers fill their own containers directly from a bulk dispenser (pet food, cereals, ground products, etc.) are one way forward; hygiene and food safety requirements, however, must be observed at all times.

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