



The Numbers on Plastic

PLASTIC IDENTIFICATION CODES

Did you know that the "recycling symbols" with the numbers 1-7 inside, found on many plastic products have nothing to do with recycling and are sometimes not even recyclable? These numbers are called plastic/ resin identification codes and are used to help identify different types of plastics. It is important to know what plastics are recyclable in your area.



Polyethylene Terephthalate

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This is the most widely recycled plastic in the world. It includes peanut butter jars, soda and water bottles, and salad dressing bottles. The plastic is crushed and then shredded into small flakes which are then reprocessed to make new bottles, or spun into polyester fiber.

High Density Polyethylene

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The stiff plastic used to make milk jugs, laundry detergent bottles, and yogurt containers. This plastic is widely recyclable and durable as it does not break down when exposed to extreme heat or cold. For this reason, it is often used to make plastic lumber and waste bins.



Polyvinyl Chlorine

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A soft, flexible plastic frequently used for making vinyl and pipes but also for clear plastic food wrapping, cooking oil bottles, bubble wrap, and children's toys. This is often referred to as the "poison plastic" because it leeches numerous toxins throughout its entire life cycle. This plastic is NOT recyclable.





Low Density Polyethylene

A soft, flexible plastic used to make shrink wrap, bread bags, and squeezable bottles.

This plastic is not commonly recyclable, but this is changing in some communities. Recycled LDPE is used for plastic lumber and floor tiles.



Polystyrene

This plastic is inexpensive, lightweight, and **NOT curbside recyclable**. It is used to make any type of "Styrofoam" products including takeout containers and packing peanuts. This type of plastic makes up 35% of the US landfill and since it is ultra lightweight, it is constantly breaking apart and dispersed along streets, beaches, and in the ocean.

Polypropylene



Tough and lightweight, this plastic is used to make storage bins, straws, chip bags, packing tape, bottle caps, and medicine bottles. **This plastic is not recycled by all curbside services but certainly can be.** Recycled PP can be used to make battery cases, brooms, bins, and trays.

Other (Bisphenol and others)



This category includes everything else like water cooler bottles, large plastic containers, and mixed plastic materials. Recycling protocol is not standard in this category and is **difficult to recycle** so it is important to check your local recycling guidelines.

Learn more how to care for our planet on our website!

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