

RECYCLING BEGINS AT HOME

The amount of rubbish produced by New Zealanders every year is an ongoing problem. It is estimated that 46% of the average rubbish bag is organic waste which could be composted, and 28% of our rubbish is paper. Most of this rubbish ends up in a landfill site, but there are other ways to dispose of waste. We can recycle many items, and we can reuse lots of others. This will reduce the amount of rubbish that we throw away every year, and help to clean up the environment and save ourselves money, too.



Now answer these questions

- How much rubbish could be composted?
- Where does most of our rubbish go?
- How can we reduce our rubbish?
- How much of our rubbish is packaging?



KEY WORDS

Recycling — making something new out of waste materials, for example, compost made from garden and organic kitchen waste; writing and wrapping paper made from cardboard and waste paper; bottles made from old glass

Reusing — using items again, for example, plastic containers for storage, envelopes, glass jars, growing seedlings in tins

Reducing — creating and throwing away less rubbish!

All of these things can be found in and around most homes, or in the garden, and could end up in our rubbish bags:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| cardboard boxes | glass bottles and jars | plastic packaging and containers | |
| newspapers and magazines | lawn clippings | envelopes | leaves |
| coffee grounds | tins | junk mail | plastic bags |

Talk with your tutor — maybe you can think of more.

What do you do with...?

junk mail	I cut them up for rags.
newspapers	I give them away.
old clothes	I take them to a charity shop.
magazines	I throw them in the rubbish.
cardboard	I reuse them for leftover food.
plastic bags	I put them in the compost heap.
tea leaves	I put them in the recycle bin.
vegetable scraps	I use them again.
plastic containers	I grow seedlings in them.
plastic drink bottles	I give them to friends to read.
tin cans	I take them to the recycle shop.
aluminium cans	I put it in the rubbish.
paper bags	I put it in the recycle bin.
leaves	I take them to the recycle shop.
ash	I take it to the council dump.
weeds	I reuse them for shopping.
lawn clippings	

Tutor notes: Cut the words and responses into strips and ask your learner to make the question, for example 'What do you do with old clothes?'. Talk about the options and ask your learner to choose a response and read it out. Take turns to ask the question and choose an answer.

REUSE, RECYCLE or RUBBISH?



We can put some of these things in our council recycle bins, and we can reuse or give away other things.

Ask each other what you do with different kinds of rubbish and fill in the chart.

Ask questions like this:

"Do you reuse envelopes?" or "Do you recycle tins and cans?" or "Do you put junk mail in the rubbish?"

DO YOU ...	REUSE - example?	RECYCLE - example?	PUT IN RUBBISH
Cardboard		put in recycle bin	
Glass			
Plastic			yes
Newspapers			
Magazines	give away after reading		
Lawn clippings			
Envelopes			
Leaves			
Coffee grounds			
Vegetable scraps			
Weeds			
Junk Mail			
Tins and cans			

Tutor notes:

Use this grid to vary the questions from the previous page and write down the responses. Make two copies and take turns to ask and be asked! Your learner might like to use it with a friend and show you the results next time.



COMPOSTING

Composting is Nature's way of recycling kitchen and garden waste. Compost is good for the soil and promotes strong and healthy plant growth.



You can start making a compost heap straight away. You need a space about 1 metre square in a sheltered part of the garden. The heap should be covered. You can buy compost bins from most hardware shops, or make a wooden bin yourself. A heap covered with a piece of old woollen carpet in a corner of the garden will do, but it is less tidy.

Do not put the heap or bin on concrete or paving stones. The compost bin or heap should stand on bare earth to allow the air to circulate and to help drainage, and to allow earthworms in. Worms are great recyclers! The heap will generate heat and this will help break down the ingredients. Layer different materials in your compost heap. Start with a layer of twiggly material, then add a layer of dead leaves, then put in layers from the list. Chop up hard pieces and anything bigger than 5cm to speed up the process.

Important ingredients for good compost are AIR and WATER. Turn the mixture every week to let air in, and water the layers as you add to the heap. After about 3 to 4 months the mixture should be dark and crumbly. Now you can use your compost!

YOU CAN COMPOST

kitchen scraps - fruit and vegetable peelings, eggshells, teabags, coffee grounds

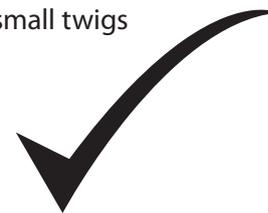
garden waste - grass clippings, hedge trimmings, some weeds, dead leaves and small twigs

seaweed

cow, sheep or chicken manure

straw

shredded newspaper



DO NOT COMPOST

Meat, fish, fat or cooked food scraps

Wood, bones, plastic, metal, glass

Certain weeds, like dandelions, convolvulus and dock

Anything poisonous



TRUE OR FALSE?

It's Ok to put fat and meat in the compost heap

Compost is good for the soil

Place the compost bin on concrete to warm it up

Layers of kitchen and garden waste break down to make compost

You don't need water in a compost heap

It's better to send your garden waste to the landfill

Air, water and warmth are necessary in a compost heap

