



Plastic Bags Don't Belong

WHY NOT: They wrap around the sorting equipment.

INSTEAD: Recycle your bags at a participating grocery or retail store.

Plastic bags don't belong in your recycling bin, but you can recycle them at participating grocery and retail stores. You will notice that many stores have a bag collection bin in their entry area. Click [here](#) for an online directory.

Another great option is to get into the habit of bringing reusable bags when you shop.



Bagged Recyclables Don't Belong

WHY NOT: They look too much like trash at the recycling plant.

INSTEAD: Keep it loose! Don't bag up your recyclables.

If you collect your recyclables in a plastic bag, please simply dump the recyclables out into your bin. You can then place the plastic bag in your trash or – better yet – take the (clean and dry) bag to a retail or grocery store with a bag collection program. Another option is to collect your recyclables in a reusable bin or box that you periodically empty out into your curbside recycling bin.



Clothes/Textiles Don't Belong

WHY NOT: They wrap around the sorting equipment.

INSTEAD: Donate them through a local clothing drive, drop box, or reuse store.

By donating your clothes, you reduce waste while also helping people in need. These national organizations that accept donations: **Goodwill, Salvation Army, Vietnam Veterans of America, Planet Aid, and Career Gear**. More locally, you can donate to local churches, homeless shelters, thrift stores, and clothing drives. Animal shelters will often appreciate old towels, blankets, and rags.



Tanglers Don't Belong

WHY NOT?: They wrap around the sorting equipment.

INSTEAD: Place your unwanted cords, ropes, hoses, and other tanglers in the trash.

Cords, ropes, and hoses are not recyclable, but they can often be creatively reused. Cut hoses and ropes into shorter lengths and put them in a box in your garage or shop. You may be surprised by all the creative uses you come up with for them. Want ideas? Google Reuse ideas for garden hoses.

VHS tapes are another surprisingly common tangler at our recycling plants. VHS tapes do not belong in your recycling bin!



Scrap Metal Items Don't Belong

WHY NOT: They damage the sorting equipment.

INSTEAD: Look up your local scrap metal recycler.

Scrap metal does not belong in your recycling bin, but local scrap metal recyclers will often accept both ferrous and non-ferrous metals and they might even pay you for them. Search online for scrap metal recyclers near you. If you're unsure, consider calling ahead to make sure they will accept your item.



Batteries Don't Belong

WHY NOT: They can cause fires, endanger workers, and harm the environment.

INSTEAD: Find your best disposal option at earth911.com

Batteries don't belong in your recycling bin because they contain materials that are toxic if not properly dealt with. To find the best disposal option for you, visit earth911.com. If you find yourself going through disposable batteries often, however, it might save you money to switch over to rechargeable ones.



Small Items Don't Belong

WHY NOT: Anything under 2" x 2" will fall through the sorting equipment.

INSTEAD: Bring your own reusable cutlery and straws! Place the disposable ones and other small items in the trash.

A great way to keep small objects like plastic utensils and straws out of the recycling stream is to not use them at all! Try searching online for "travel cutlery" and "reusable straws". They'll often come with a convenient carrying case or cleaning kit. Consider changing the way you order: Could favorite take-out place skip the plastic forks and sauce packets? Could your server bring your drink without a straw?



Food Waste/Liquids Don't Belong

WHY NOT: They reduce the recyclability of other items.

INSTEAD: Look up local food waste programs or place in your trash.

Depending on where you live, you may have access to a drop-off facility that accepts food waste or a curbside collection service. Many households use backyard composting for a portion of their food waste. Check with your local county extension office or solid waste district to see if your community provides discounts on backyard composting bins. In addition to reducing your waste, you'll produce great compost for your garden!



Electronics Don't Belong

WHY NOT: They get broken during sorting. Batteries and chemicals are unsafe for our workers.

INSTEAD: Look up your local electronic waste recycler or retail take-back programs.

Electronics don't belong in your recycling bin, but they don't have to be trashed. Look online for recycling and donation options for your used electronics. Reputable vendors will ensure that your data is fully destroyed to protect your security. Look for vendors who are certified by R2 Solutions or e-Stewards.