

Plastic FAQs

Why are we so reliant on plastic?

Plastic has been a revolutionary packaging material due to its lightweight nature, waterproof and airtight qualities, as well as being see-through and easy to label.

What is the NSW Plastics Action Plan?

The NSW Plastics Action Plan was launched by the Government in June 2021 to manage plastic throughout its lifecycle - from generation through to production, supply and reducing plastic waste. This is why, in June 2022, NSW started to phase out single-use plastic items.

Why can't I recycle soft plastics?

Recyclable materials from the yellow lid recycling bins are sent for sorting and processing at a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). Soft plastics get caught in machinery at the MRF, causing delays, placing waste workers at risk and increasing processing costs. Only empty and rigid plastic containers from the kitchen, bathroom and laundry can be recycled.

So, how should I dispose of my soft plastics?

Unfortunately, there is not currently a specialised soft plastic collection service available, so the only disposal option for soft plastics is the red lid general waste bin destined for landfill.

How do I know what waste goes where?

The Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) can be found on many different packaging materials and is designed to take the confusion out of recycling, saving you time and reducing waste in landfill.

Recyclable: This label identifies that this type of packaging can be placed in the recycling bin	Box 	Conditionally recyclable: This label provides special instructions to be able to recycle this packaging type	Foil  Scrunch into Ball	Not recyclable: This label identifies that this piece of packaging is not recyclable and must go in the general waste bin.	Lid 
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For further information, contact your local Council.

SOFT PLASTICS UNWRAPPED!



Did you know?

Soft plastics refers to any kind of plastic items (usually packaging) that can be easily scrunched in your hand.

Identifying soft plastics

Examples of soft plastics include:

- Plastic bags
- Bread bags
- Pasta and rice bags
- Chip packets
- Lolly wrappers
- Cereal box inners
- Cling wrap
- Bubble wrap
- Magazine and newspaper wrapping
- Frozen food bags
- Produce bags



Why are soft plastics not recyclable?

Soft plastics are the most common type of contamination found in kerbside recycling bins. Contamination refers to materials that cannot be recycled. Plastic bags and other soft plastics cause machinery breakdowns, delays and increase processing costs at recycling facilities.

Make sure your recycling efforts don't go to waste by keeping your recycling bin soft plastic free!

Five facts about plastic

- Australia uses around 70 billion pieces of soft 'scrunchable' plastics each year! Our use of plastic is increasing and, across the world, will double by 2040
- Most plastic bags are only used once before being thrown away
- One million tonnes of Australia's annual plastic consumption are single use plastics
- 84% of plastic is sent to landfill each year, taking between 50 to 1,000 years to break down. Only 13% is recycled!
- Lightweight soft plastics can easily become airborne litter, impacting our environment and waterways. By 2050, it is estimated that plastic in the oceans will outweigh fish.

Soft plastic solutions

The best way to solve the soft plastic issue is to avoid soft plastic use wherever possible and consider alternatives.

- Replace plastic carry bags with reusable bags
- Buy in bulk or shop at waste-free stores to minimise packaging
- Select items with recyclable packaging instead of soft plastic packaging
- Replace plastic produce bags for reusable mesh bags
- Replace cling wrap with Tupperware containers or beeswax wraps