



In 1989 California launched an ambitious campaign to cut waste and curb our dependency on landfills. Each city and county developed plans and initiated recycling programs to help get there. And thanks to you and all Californians, today we recycle more than half our waste — five times as much as we used to. And now we're all working together to achieve California's statewide goal of 75 percent recycling by 2020!

CalRecycle and your local officials encourage you to try these simple steps to cut your trash down to size.

Californians are doing a great job recycling bottles, cans, and newspapers, including more than 16 billion beverage containers last year alone! But we can do better. Have you tried grasscycling or composting? Are you recycling your old computers and other electronic waste? How about mattresses, carpet, and tires? Do you know how many miles your vehicle can go between oil changes? Read on for tips to help you save money, time, and the environment.

1. Recycle! (Freecycle and Downcycle, too!)

Your city or county has developed some great programs to make it easy for you to recycle everything from bottles, cans and paper to used oil, carpets, and mattresses. Recycled materials are processed and made into new products instead of ending up in a landfill. Common household items that can be recycled include:

- ▶ Newspapers, phone books, printer paper, shredded paper, junk mail, cards, and coloring books;
- ▶ Cardboard boxes, including cereal boxes and pizza boxes (remember to flatten cardboard);
- ▶ Virtually all soda, beer, and other beverage cans made from aluminum;
- ▶ Most food cans are made from steel and are easily recycled. Aluminum or tin foil, disposable aluminum pie plates, and other products are also easy to recycle – just make sure the items are mostly free from food and other residue;
- ▶ Glass bottles and jars;
- ▶ Plastic containers labeled “1” that are made from “PET” or “PETE” plastic (most sizes of plastic soda and water bottles);
- ▶ Plastic containers labeled “2” that are made from “HDPE” plastic (milk jugs, laundry detergent bottles, plastic bags, water pipes, refillable bottles, bottle caps, and even hula hoops!) This is one of the most common types of plastic used by consumers and is readily recyclable in most areas;
- ▶ Check with your local government environmental services department to see what else can be recycled in your area!

Also, many communities have a “freecycle” online group who are giving (and getting) used items for free. It's all about reuse and keeping good stuff out of landfills! And before you hit the mall, “downcycle” – take an inventory to see if you really need to buy something new. Downcycle also means bringing your own reusable bags when you go shopping, as well as containers when buying in bulk to reduce packaging. When you do buy something new, check the labels and try to purchase **products made with recycled content**. Everything from clothes to carpeting, cans to comic books can contain recycled materials.



2. Be CRV Savvy

Most beverages other than milk, wine, and distilled spirits are subject to California Redemption Value (CRV), so the next time you enjoy a frosty beverage, take a closer look at the label. If you see a symbol that says CA CASH REFUND or CA CRV, you'll get more out of that bottle or can than a little refreshment. That symbol means the container is eligible to be recycled for cash – 5 cents for most glass bottles, plastic bottles, and aluminum cans less than 24 ounces, and 10 cents for 24 ounces and larger. Check out [CalRecycle's website](#) or call 1-800-RECYCLE to find a recycling center near you.

Consumers are encouraged to recycle non-CRV beverage containers for scrap value at recycling centers that will accept the material, or through their residential curbside or multi-family dwelling recycling programs.



3. E-Cycle Your E-Waste

Millions of old televisions, computer monitors, laptops, and other electronic waste find their way into California's robust recycling infrastructure each year. CalRecycle oversees efforts to make sure many e-waste products are properly recycled. E-waste products include: TVs, computers, monitors, DVD players, cell phones, video game consoles, VCRs, stereos, copiers, and fax machines. When your electronic devices are no longer working, **e-cycle** them properly instead of throwing them in the trash where they can leak harmful chemicals into the environment. In California, it's against the law to put many electronic devices in a regular landfill. You can find your local e-waste recycling location at [CalRecycle's website](#) or by calling 1-800-RECYCLE.

4. Grasscycle

Grasscycling is the natural recycling of grass by leaving clippings on the lawn when mowing – they decompose quickly and provide valuable nutrients back to the soil. Grasscycling, similar to mulching, is also an effective way of conserving water. Many modern mowers are mulching mowers that cut and recut grass into tiny particles, which drop down onto the soil. But remember, avoid mowing wet grass. It will clump and pile.

5. Compost

Composting, nature's own way of recycling, is the controlled decomposition of organic materials such as leaves, twigs, grass clippings, and food scraps. Not only is composting good for the garden, it's also good for the environment by reducing greenhouse gases and it diverts waste from landfills. In 2012 California had 29 million tons of disposal, about 32 percent of which was compostable green waste – materials that can easily be diverted from landfills to be used as compost for landscaping, or create renewable energy such as biofuel.



Composting at home is super easy and a great way to teach kids about conservation techniques. Composting can, on average, reduce a household's waste by 25 percent!



CalRecycle's

Top 10 Tips to

Cut Your Trash Down to Size

www.calrecycle.ca.gov

Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery

The best way to compost food waste is to mix it with dry leaves, sticks and twigs, wood chips, sawdust, dried/dead plants, shredded newspaper, or paper from a home shredder, along with yard waste such as grass clippings. It's best to cover the pile with wood chips, plastic sheeting, or anything that will help retain moisture and heat, which are vital to composting. A compost pile in your backyard will have lots of **microbes** taking up residence. Keep in mind that the microbes need oxygen, water, and food, so the pile will need to be "turned" about once a week by fluffing the pile with a pitch fork to give it air. You can also turn the pile completely over by building it into another pile. If the pile gets too wet or dense with food scraps, it will smell bad and composting will slow down or stop altogether.

In most California climates, the compost is ready in three to six months, when it becomes a dark crumbly material that is uniform in texture. Spread it in the garden, raised beds, or under and around plants. The compost can also be used as potting soil.

6. Xeriscape

If starting from scratch or thinking of redoing an existing lawn or garden, xeriscaping might be right for you. Xeriscaping means landscaping with slow-growing, drought-tolerant plants to conserve water and reduce yard trimmings.

California's limited supply of water, subject to ever increasing demands, is just one resource saved by xeriscaping. Xeriscapes generally require less fertilizer and fewer pest control measures than traditional landscapes. Because pesticides and fertilizers can inadvertently harm beneficial organisms, as well as impact air and water quality, reducing their use is a good idea. And, of course, using less of these materials saves money.

7. Join the Paperless Society

With the prevalence of smartphones, tablets, and e-readers, we can greatly reduce our use of paper. From to-do lists, party invites, and scanners to removing yourself from junk email and catalog lists, there's an app for that! There are also many online resources to help you become paper-free. Sign up to receive electronic bills and state-

ments, and pay bills online. This not only saves paper, but also saves time.

Consider using cloth napkins and towels instead of paper napkins and paper towels. You can pick up a bunch of different colors and styles to mix and match on the cheap from your local thrift shop. You'll be surprised how cloth napkins elevate any event, including your bag lunch (remember to use a reusable bag!).

8. Do No Harm

It is illegal to put used oil and hazardous household products such as pesticides, paints, or gasoline into your trash bin. Dumping them on the ground or into the storm drain is illegal and harms the environment. But you should not store used oil or unneeded hazardous products around your house or garage. And when dumped illegally, just one gallon of motor oil can contaminate 1 million gallons of water – a year's supply for 50 people. Contact your local environmental services department for information on where to take household hazardous waste.

9. Check Your Number

The old standard of 3,000-mile oil change intervals is woefully out of date. Most vehicles today can be driven 5,000, 7,500, 10,000, and even 15,000 miles before needing an oil change. Check your owner's manual for the manufacturer's recommended oil change interval, or use CalRecycle's searchable online database, [Check Your Number](#).



By volume, used motor oil is one of the largest hazardous waste streams in California: Almost 115 million gallons are sold in the state each year. While about 70 percent is collected after use, it continues to be a serious environmental problem because it is insoluble and contains heavy metals and toxic chemicals. It makes its way into lakes, streams, and oceans via the stormwater system and endangers fish, waterfowl, insects, and other aquatic life.

10. Visit calrecycle.ca.gov or call us at 1-800-RECYCLE

Got questions or want to learn more about how you can reduce, reuse and recycle to cut your trash down to size and help our state achieve 75 percent recycling? Our website is chock full of great resources, including:

- ▶ Find a recycling center near your
- ▶ Check Your Number – find out how many miles your car can go between oil changes
- ▶ Beverage Containers and what's CRV eligible
- ▶ Electronic Waste
- ▶ Tires
- ▶ Used Oil and Filters
- ▶ Mattress Product Management
- ▶ Carpet Care Management
- ▶ Household Hazardous Waste
- ▶ Medication Waste and Sharps
- ▶ Construction and Demolition Debris
- ▶ Other Plastics
- ▶ Home Gardening
- ▶ Compost and Mulch
- ▶ Landscaping Waste Prevention
- ▶ Do-It-Yourself Oil Changers
- ▶ Home Remodeling Green
- ▶ Holiday Waste
- ▶ Environmentally Preferable Purchasing
- ▶ Product Stewardship
- ▶ RecycleStore
- ▶ Plastic Carryout Bags
- ▶ Wastes Banned from the Trash
- ▶ General Interest Publications

The California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in access to its programs. CalRecycle publications are available in accessible formats upon request by calling the Public Affairs Office at (916)341-6300.

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