

Recycling Symbols Every Business Owner Should Recognize

PLASTIC



Polyethylene terephthalate (PET or PETE)

A widely used and easily recyclable transparent plastic, PET or PETE is accepted by the majority of local recycling programs. It is often used for disposable food and beverage containers (e.g., water bottles), as well as various containers for foods and grocery items.



High-density polyethylene (HDPE)

This type of opaque plastic is not transparent and has higher temperature resistance than PET. While slightly more difficult to recycle, it is still accepted by most programs. HDPE is ideal for many chemicals and household cleaners and can also be found in food containers.



Polyvinyl chloride (PVC)

More difficult to recycle and less likely to be accepted by your local recycling programs than PET or HDPE, PVC is a stronger plastic used in detergent bottles, piping, toys, and more.



Low-density polyethylene (LDPE)

LDPE plastic, typically used for making bags, is soft and flexible. Check with your local recycling program, as it can jam recycling equipment. LDPE bags and products may be recyclable in some industrial centers and can often be dropped off at local stores.



Polypropylene (PP)

Polypropylene or PP plastic is often used in transparent cups, straws, bags, containers, and more. While it's recyclable, you should check with your local program to determine their recycling rules around PP (#5) plastic. As it may jam equipment, PP is generally not accepted by curbside programs and may need to be sorted separately or shredded prior to recycling.



Polystyrene (PS)

Recycling #6 (PS) plastic, such as polystyrene and Styrofoam, is difficult due to its lightweight and bulky nature. It's commonly found in items like foam cups, food containers, and packing peanuts. Though challenging to recycle, certain specialized programs and facilities may accept it.



Other

#7 plastic, often categorized as "Other" or "Mixed," includes several plastic types that don't fit into other categories. It is more difficult to recycle because it's composed of multiple plastic types, but it's worth checking with your local program or recycling partners.

GLASS

Typically accompanied by the lettering "GL" or "GLS" underneath the recycling symbol, there are 3 recycling codes found on glass items. Most glass bottles and jars can be recycled locally if they are clean and not broken.



Mixed Glass



Clear Glass



Green Glass

PAPER

Paper and cardboard products are typically recyclable if they are dry, clean of grease or food materials, and made from the right types of fibers. Look for these symbols when recycling paper and cardboard.



Cardboard



Plain Paper



Mixed Paper