

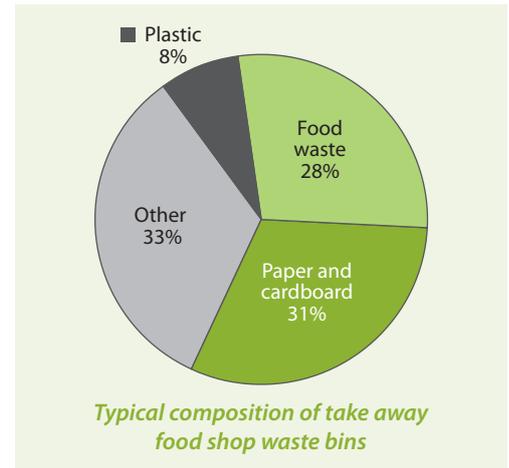
Reduce waste and increase take home profits

Two thirds of a typical waste bin in a takeaway shop is filled with paper and cardboard, food waste and plastic, almost all of which can be recycled instead of being sent to landfill.¹

By putting these materials in the correct recycling bins your business could save money via a reduced waste collection charge. At the same time your business will be helping our environment.

By making a few simple changes, takeaway shops can reduce their waste by more than half. This can be achieved by things like recycling cardboard and paper and reducing plastic waste by only supplying straws, plastic bags and disposable forks if a customer specifically requests them.

Leftover food can be donated to charity or sent to an off-site recycling facility. Even your cooking oil can be converted to cash if you recycle sufficient amounts.



Simple ways takeaway food shops can reduce waste and save

Think in terms of the waste hierarchy. How can you avoid, reduce, reuse or recycle?

- Avoid** → **Do we need it?**
- Reduce** → **Do we need so much?**
- Reuse** → **Can we use it again?**
- Recycle** → **Can someone else use it or turn it into other products?**



AVOID

Find out if your suppliers can take back packaging or supply reusable packaging, such as crates. Order fruit and vegetables delivered without excess stalks or leaves.

To avoid food waste, train staff how to handle produce better. Control stock rotation, especially in fridges and freezers. Check stock deliveries to ensure products are undamaged. Immediately place products in appropriate storage facilities.

You can also:

- Use paper products rather than plastic, for example cardboard 'clam-shells' or paper coffee cups instead of polystyrene.
- Provide customers with a carry bag only if they request one and then give an appropriate size bag. Avoid giving out bags that are too large.
- Refrigerate unused portions. Store unserved food immediately and handle with care.

Visit lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/business for more information on food waste avoidance.



REDUCE

A key way to reduce the amount of packaging is by buying in bulk. This means paying less for packaging. Give preference to suppliers that will take packaging back for reuse.

Support local businesses by sourcing goods and produce in your area. You will pay less for transport and energy and your food could be fresher. Other ways to reduce waste are to:

- Downsize rather than upsize portions. Offer a choice of portion sizes so the customer gets exactly the amount they want.
- Provide small items like straws or sachets of sugar, salt, soya sauce or condiments only on request.
- Keep your work areas clean and tidy. If things are well-organised and labelled clearly, you and your staff will know where everything is and can work more efficiently.
- Put up signs that promote waste reduction and recycling.



REUSE

Ask suppliers to help reduce waste by using returnable or reusable packaging. For example, fresh meat and fish can be supplied in returnable plastic crates, as can bread, milk and pre-made sandwiches.

Return wooden and plastic pallets to suppliers. Clean, undamaged polystyrene and waxed cardboard boxes can be returned to the markets. Offer customers empty cardboard boxes to carry their food home in rather than plastic bags.

Use refillable and reusable items, such as sugar and condiment dispensers and supply reusable cutlery, tableware and food storage containers.



RECYCLE

Donate unused food to suitable charities and then sort out what you can recycle. Getting recycling bins collected could be cheaper than sending waste to landfill.

Go to **BusinessRecycling.com.au** to find a local recycling service provider. This website allows you to search for service providers in your area that collect specific materials for recycling or that allow you to drop them off.

If you are in a shopping complex, ask the centre's management about setting up a recycling service for you.

Save money by matching your bin collection timetable to your business needs. If your bins are not normally full after a week, then consider moving to a fortnightly collection cycle. Share recycling bins with another business.

Ask your recycling service for staff training signs and innovative systems. Find out how you can work together to get a reduced fee for pick up. Here are some other ways to improve recycling:

- Make sure staff, cleaners and subcontractors follow your recycling program and that they put materials in the correct bin.
- Give your customers the opportunity to recycle in store, by encouraging them to bring their own bags.
- Collect all used cooking oils and fats in an oil bin or drum for re-processing. It is illegal to dispose of these down any drains and you may be able to get money for good quality oil.
- When refurbishing, include recycling storage areas in your plan.
- If you do use plastic containers for food, find recyclable ones. Let your customers know that can they be reused and recycled and encourage them to play their part. You can read about the seven types of plastic in the fact sheet *Plastics No 1-7*.
- Buy products with recycled content such as napkins, toilet paper, office printer paper and packaging. If your menus and promotional material are printed on recycled paper, mention that in the content. This helps to build demand for more products made from recycled paper.

Implementing sustainable waste policies could save you money, help attract or retain customers and preserve the environment.

For further information

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