



Look at the resource below, which explains what happens to our rubbish.

General Waste

General waste includes items such as dirty packaging or food-contaminated cardboard (e.g., greasy pizza boxes), broken toys or household items, disposable nappies, tissues, and wipes. It is the rubbish we throw away that cannot easily be recycled or composted.

Once collected, most of our general waste goes to landfill sites, which are large areas of land designed to store rubbish safely underground. However, landfills fill up quickly and can cause environmental issues, like pollution.

Some general waste is burned in special incinerators to create electricity and heat for buildings, helping reduce landfill use.



Metal

Metal cans and tins are cleaned, sorted (steel or aluminium), then melted down. The molten metal is poured into moulds or sheets to form new metal products, such as drinks cans, bikes and scooters, cars and buses, and kitchen utensils like saucepans and cutlery.



Plastic

Plastic bottles and containers are cleaned, sorted by type and colour, then shredded into tiny pieces called flakes. These flakes are melted down into pellets that can be reshaped into new plastic items, including drinks bottles, clothing like fleece jackets, plastic bags, toys and storage containers.

Paper and Cardboard

Paper and cardboard are collected and sorted. They're then mixed with water and chemicals to form a pulp, cleaned to remove ink and staples, and finally dried and rolled into new paper products, like newspapers, notebooks, writing paper, toilet rolls and cardboard boxes.



Food and Garden Waste (Composting)

Food scraps and garden waste naturally break down into compost over time. You can do composting yourself at home, or at special facilities. This compost is rich in nutrients and can be used to help plants grow.

Glass

Glass jars and bottles are separated by colour and then crushed into small pieces called cullet. This cullet is melted down and shaped into new glass products, including jam jars, drinks bottles, windows, and glass containers for food and drinks.



Reflection

We can all make a difference by sorting rubbish carefully, recycling more, and taking responsibility for how we deal with waste.