

# WASTE AND RECYCLING OFFICE BASICS



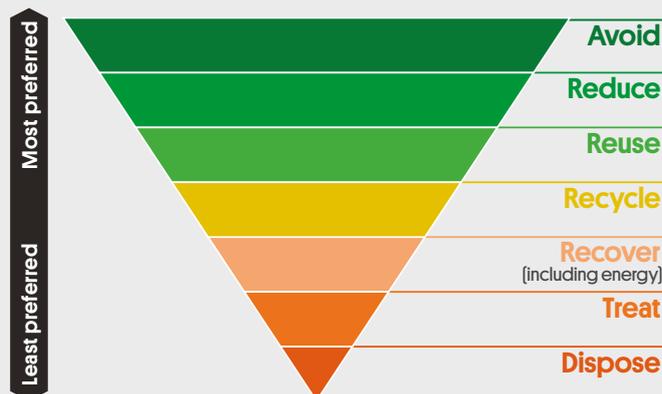
Government of South Australia  
Green Industries SA

Information for people working in or managing offices in South Australia [SA]. By making changes in your office, you can improve recycling rates and reduce landfill disposal. This can also save costs and meet staff expectations about responsible environmental management.

## Waste Management Hierarchy

The Waste Management Hierarchy is a useful tool to guide changes.

It outlines the preferred order of waste and recycling management.



## Minimum standard recycling services

Adopting the following minimum standard services means materials are responsibly managed and you meet legal obligations for materials banned from landfill. Most recycling services can be organised through a commercial provider (for leased buildings, this may be arranged via the building or facilities manager).

	<p><b>Paper and cardboard recycling</b> Up to 70% of office waste is paper and cardboard. Commercial recycling services can be paper only, or combined paper and cardboard. A confidential paper service can also be arranged for sensitive documents.</p>
	<p><b>Comingled recycling</b> Glass [bottles, jars], hard plastic containers, metal cans and paper/cardboard are collected together, sorted at a Material Recovery Facility and sold to be made into new products. Materials should be loose, not bagged, when placed in bulk bins by staff or cleaners. Council comingled [yellow-lid] recycling bins may be available for smaller offices.</p>
	<p><b>Organics recycling</b> Food waste, coffee grounds, tissues, paper towels and other organic matter are made into compost locally in SA. Council food/garden organics recycling [green] bins may be available for smaller offices.</p>
	<p><b>E-waste recycling</b> E-waste is banned from landfill. Computers, laptops, phones can be recycled into new products. E-waste can be dropped-off at your local transfer station or <a href="#">collection services</a> are available for commercial entities. When purchasing new equipment, it may be possible for the collection and recycling of electronic items to be included in the purchase agreement [e.g. IT System upgrades]. <a href="#">MobileMuster</a> offers drop off points for phones or a free post back option.</p>
	<p><b>Printer/toner cartridge recycling</b> Inks, plastics and metals are separated and recycled. Your cartridge supplier may collect them or organise a free collection through <a href="#">Cartridges 4 Planet Ark</a>.</p>
	<p><b>Lighting recycling</b> Fluorescent lights are banned from landfill. Lights are separated into glass, metals and mercury and recycled. They can be <a href="#">dropped off</a> or collection services are available. <a href="#">FluoroCycle</a> is a Product Stewardship Scheme which aims to increase recycling of mercury containing lamps and businesses can become signatories. In leased buildings, the building manager or contracted electrician should manage and recycle lights.</p>

## Additional recycling services for better practice

The following will help to increase landfill diversion.

	<b>Soft plastics recycling</b> Flexible, soft plastic such as bags and wrappers are recycled into new products, including furniture. Commercial collections are available for large quantities.
	<b>Battery recycling</b> Metals are recycled and chemicals captured and treated. <a href="#">Officeworks</a> may accept small numbers of batteries or your waste service provider may provide a service for large quantities. Note that lead acid batteries are banned from landfill.
	<b>Hard waste recycling</b> Good quality items such as undamaged furniture and stationery can be donated or sold. Damaged items can be taken apart and components recycled (e.g. metals).
	<b>Dry waste for energy recovery</b> Instead of going to landfill, difficult or non-recyclable items are made into a fuel source to replace natural gas in local industries. Organics and other 'wet wastes' need to be kept separate from these dry waste services.
	<b>Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) 10 cent bottles and cans</b> A staff member can drop-off containers at the local <a href="#">CDS depot</a> , or some community organisations provide collection services.

## Avoid, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

### Tip 1

Replace individual under-desk waste bins with a basket/box for paper. Staff are likely to be more mindful of waste and create less if they have to consciously dispose of it away from their desks.

### Tip 4

Buy refurbished furniture and equipment, and if something stops working, see if it can be repaired (rather than disposed). Sell or donate items that you can no longer use - ensure they are in good working order.

### Tip 2

Set double-sided printing as the default and have technology that requires staff to release documents from the printer, reducing unnecessary and accidental printing.

### Tip 5

Supply reusable crockery, coffee cups, glasses and food containers to reduce the need for single-use and disposable items. Ensure adequate washing facilities are available.

### Tip 3

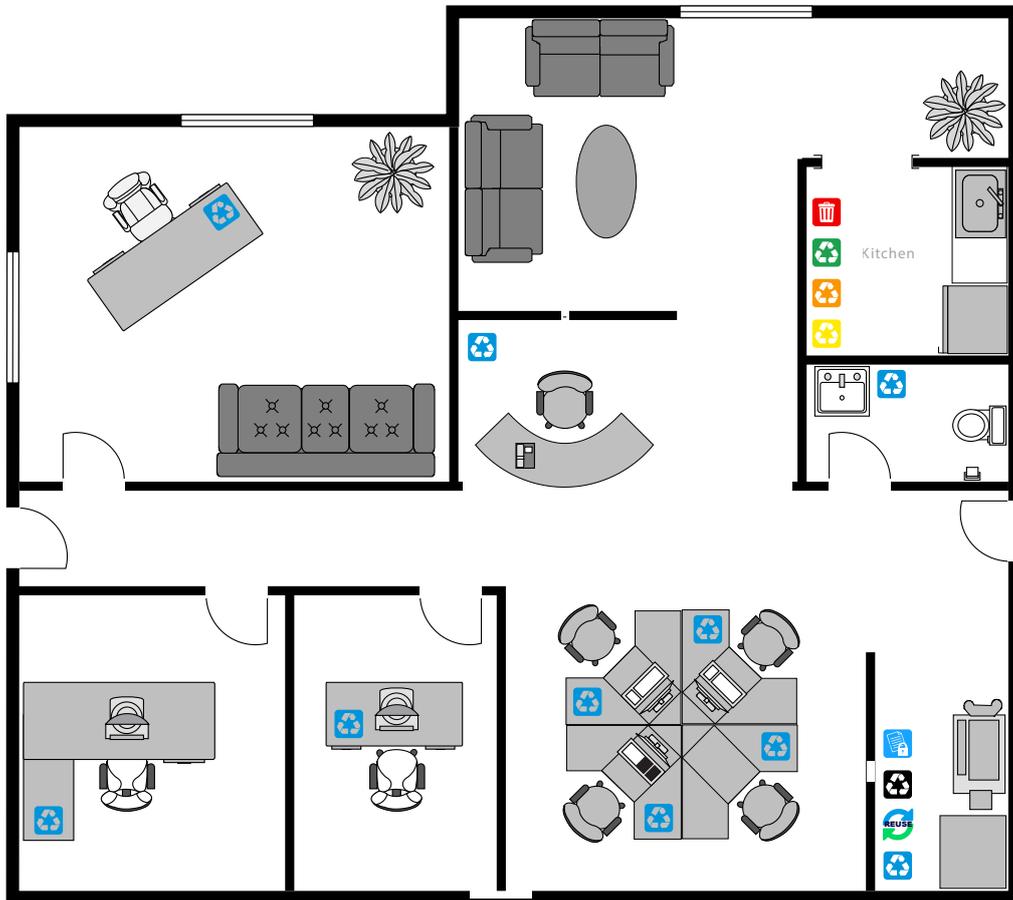
Purchase items containing high levels of post-consumer recycled content to reduce using virgin materials, such as 100% recycled content paper.

### Tip 6

Monitor catering waste to prevent over-ordering. Build positive relationships with suppliers, and let them know your preferences for minimising waste. Offer to return food service-ware rather than taking single-use or disposable items.

## Better Practice Office Bin Placement

Here's an example of a 'better practice' office bin system. This is only a guide and you will need to design your office recycling system based on your organisation and accommodation's individual situation. 'Better practice' office waste systems allow for one under desk paper recycling bin/box and recycling stations in common areas that include organics recycling in the kitchen and staff eatery areas.



	WASTE STREAM	BIN LOCATION	COMMON ITEMS
	<b>Paper and Cardboard Recycling</b>	Under Desk Bins Printer & Stationary Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper &amp; Cardboard</li> <li>• Newspapers &amp; Magazines</li> <li>• Manilla Folders</li> <li>• Post - It Notes</li> <li>• Envelopes (with or without windows)</li> </ul>
	<b>Confidential Paper Recycling</b>	Printer & Stationary Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive Paper Documents for shredding</li> </ul>
	<b>Comingled Recycling</b>	Kitchen / Staff Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink Cans &amp; Bottles</li> <li>• Juice &amp; Milk Cartons</li> <li>• Aluminium Foil [clean &amp; balled]</li> <li>• Rigid Plastic</li> <li>• Jars &amp; Lids</li> </ul>
	<b>Organics Recycling</b>	Kitchen / Staff Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Scraps</li> <li>• Teabags</li> <li>• Coffee Grinds</li> <li>• Compostable Coffee Cups &amp; Bioware</li> <li>• Tissues &amp; Handtowels</li> </ul>
	<b>Soft Plastics</b>	Kitchen / Staff Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plastic Food Wrappers</li> <li>• Plastic Bags</li> <li>• Flexible Plastics</li> </ul>
	<b>Dedicated Collection Recycling</b>	Printer & Stationary Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For items such as Batteries, Mobile Phones &amp; Electronic Waste</li> </ul>
	<b>Reuse</b>	Printer & Stationary Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stationary &amp; Paper Reuse Area</li> </ul>
	<b>Landfill or Dry Waste</b>	Kitchen / Staff Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disposable Coffee Cups</li> <li>• Crockery</li> <li>• Broken Glass</li> <li>• Polystyrene</li> </ul>

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## Staff engagement

Involve staff in waste improvement initiatives. If you track and report on waste generation and recycling, communicate to staff on progress and performance, and celebrate achievements. Remember to keep communication positive and encouraging.

### Tip 7

Include waste management in staff inductions so everyone knows what is expected and how to dispose of their waste correctly.

Setting up good bin signage and explaining how to use the waste and recycling bin systems can help staff correctly use them.

### Tip 8

Ensure that bin signage is:

- Clear and uses pictures [avoid lengthy lists of materials].
- Consistent throughout the office and matches the bins provided.
- Aligned with the Australian Standards bin colours:
  -  Paper/cardboard recycling
  -  Comingled recycling
  -  Organics recycling
  -  Soft Plastics
  -  General waste

For examples of signage, visit [www.greenindustries.sa.gov.au/resources/recycling-signage](http://www.greenindustries.sa.gov.au/resources/recycling-signage)

### Tip 9

Business managers/owners should openly and actively encourage all staff to monitor waste practices and provide feedback about how to improve.

## Who manages/collects your waste and recycling?

Small offices may have access to their local council's three-bin kerbside service. Check the [Which Bin?](#) website for what can be placed in the bins. Additional recycling services can be provided by a commercial service provider or you can drop off items at specific locations.

In leased buildings, building/facility managers or cleaners are often responsible for managing waste/recycling services. Questions or changes to services can be organised through them.

Make sure bin services for the building match your internal office waste and recycling streams and cleaners empty them into the building's correct bulk bins.

Waste and recycling reporting may be available to tenants [but may only be for the whole building, not single tenancies]. Speak to the building/facility manager for this information.

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## Other resources and support

Green Industries SA provides more resources and support for businesses to improve their waste and recycling practices. To find out more visit <http://www.greenindustries.sa.gov.au/BSP-overview>



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