

Back to School Recycling Ideas

Tips for reducing, reusing and recycling more this school year!



As schools nationwide start another exciting year, we are encouraging administrators, teachers and students to make meaningful choices whenever possible that lead to sustained environment benefits. This could include increasing recycling awareness and participation, or instilling sustainable attitudes and behaviors throughout the school community. It is one way your school can create greater impact in the world, and in the process, potentially help families and schools save limited resources.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that the average American generates **4.4 pounds** of trash each day. By comparison, according to the EPA, we divert **1.5 pounds** of recyclable or compostable material per person each day. We can all do more to reduce, reuse and recycle in daily life.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- At the start of the school year, look through your school supplies from the previous year. Many of these items, including pens and pencils, notebooks, folders, and binders can be reused. Turn an old notebook into a new scratch pad for taking notes in class!
- Remember to use only as much paper as you might need and use both sides of paper.
- Many schools reuse text books to save money and reduce waste. If you have text books from previous years, consider sharing them with younger students.
- If you purchase new supplies, whenever possible consider products made from recycled material, such as pencils made from blue jeans or binders made from old shipping boxes. In addition, consider reusable items like refillable pens and pencils, or rechargeable batteries.

DID YOU KNOW...

Nearly 900,000,000 trees are cut down each year to provide raw materials for American paper and pulp mills, but we only recycle about 63% of the paper we use on a daily basis? (Source: EPA)



YOU CAN MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE...

Talk with administrators and teachers, and discover what you can do to make your school community more sustainable!

SCHOOL PRIDE

- Students:** Work with administrators and teachers to prioritize recycling and sustainability throughout the school community.
- Administrators:** Request a waste assessment from your waste services provider to create a diversion baseline, and involve students and teachers in establishing your recycling goals.
- Teachers:** Incorporate sustainability and recycling principles into your instruction plans, from art projects using recycled materials to earth sciences experiments, or even field trips to local recycling centers.
- Parents:** Instill lifelong sustainable behaviors in the next generation by organizing an electronics drive or volunteering on an environmental committee that promotes recycling awareness and participation throughout the school community.

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