

## What is Reuse?

Many items we throw away every day have the potential to be reused for their original purposes or for new ones.

**Reuse** allows you to:

- Get the most out of the products you buy.
- Saves you money.
- Conserves natural resources.
- Saves valuable landfill space.

## Who Should Reuse?

Everyone should. **YOU** can start by reusing items for their original purposes.

- Buy reusable and refillable food containers.



- Repair broken or worn items such as appliances.
- Mend shoes, re-upholster furniture and patch clothing.

And don't forget that if you can't use it, there's probably someone who can. Try giving clothes, magazines, furniture, etc., away.

Possible recipients are nursing homes, day care facilities, schools, churches and the Salvation Army.

## What to Reuse?

Anyone can reuse almost any material.

**Paper** is the largest component of our waste stream. Here are some ways to cut down the amount of paper we use:

- Cut up one-sided flyers and use the pieces for notepaper to keep by the telephone or use

for shopping lists.

- Write your shopping lists on junk mail return envelopes, or any used envelope and carry your coupons inside the envelope.
- Wrap postal packages in brown paper bags that you've saved.
- Reuse gift wrap for gifts or line shelves and drawers with it.

**Plastic** is water-resistant, durable, lightweight and temperature tolerant. It can be very re-useful!

- Fill empty plastic bottles (such as mouthwash bottles) with water and freeze to use in your coolers for picnics and camping.
- Use yogurt, dip, or cream-cheese containers to hold individual portions of gelatin or pudding in the refrigerator or in a lunch pack (or use



- them to pack cookies and chips so they won't get crushed).
- Reuse "microwavable" dishes for the microwave, or for picnics, bake sales or as pet dishes.
- Reuse Styrofoam "peanuts".

**Glass** can be very practical for in-home storage of just about anything.

- Turn a large pickle jar into a cookie jar.
- Punch holes in small jar caps to create a spice or cheese shaker.
- Keep bits and pieces, such as screws or nails, in jars and know at a glance what's inside.

**Metals** are another candidate for reuse.

- Use a tuna can with the top and bottom removed to cook a neat poached egg or use the same can as a cookie cutter.
- Reuse aluminum foil many times.

## Where to Reuse?

Anyone can reuse almost any material anywhere. Here are some ideas:

### In the Home

- Keep a sponge and towel near a roll of paper towels to remind you to only use paper towels when necessary.
- Use stale bread for croutons, crumbs, stuffing or french toast.
- Reuse small boxes to organize desk and dresser drawers.
- Use rechargeable batteries.



- Use old toothbrushes to scrub hard-to-reach places.
- Use tote bags for your groceries.

### In the Office

- Make two-sided copies.
- Circulate original memos instead of making numerous copies.
- Use one-sided scrap paper for notes and drafts.



### Outdoors

- Use egg cartons to grow seedlings
- Use dish or bath water to water the garden, especially during a drought
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn to serve as a mulch and fertilizer.

### With the Kids

Give children free reign over your unwanted papers, cardboard scraps and packaging--their creativity will take over from there.

## Remember the 3 R's-- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

Here are a few tips:

- Buy in bulk and in concentrated form--it saves you money and uses less packaging material.
- Avoid disposables--they're almost always unnecessary.
- Avoid overpackaged products.
- Borrow or rent things you seldom use, such as power tools.
- Give preference to items made from recycled materials or to those which are recyclable--then to be sure to recycle them!
- Write to manufacturers and to your elected officials and express your concern for our environment.

### Don't Forget to....

**Compost and Buy Recycled Products and Packaging Too!**



If you have any question about waste reduction, reuse or recycling, or any ideas to help reduce, reuse, recycle, compost or Buy Recycled, call the Bureau of Waste Reduction and Recycling at (518)402-8705.

#### Send us your ideas.

We'd like to include them in future publications.

#### Write to:

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
Division of Solid & Hazardous Materials  
Bureau of Solid Waste, Reduction & Recycling  
625 Broadway  
Albany, New York 12233-7253

#### or email us at:

[dshmwrr@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:dshmwrr@gw.dec.state.ny.us)

#### and check out our web page at:

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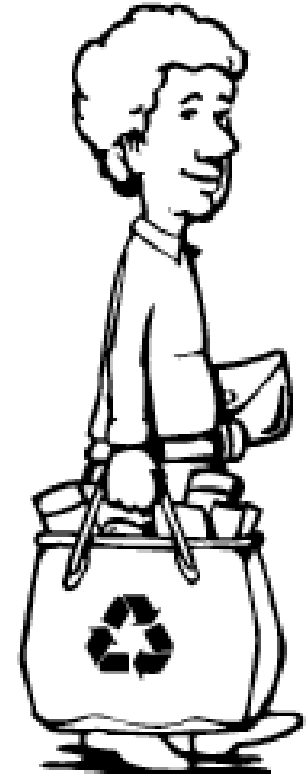


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# REUSE IT!



*Use reusable  
tote bags.*