

## WHAT AM I ABLE TO RECYCLE (continued)?

However, Americans are far more likely to recycle aluminum soda cans than aluminum foil.

**Household Hints:** Unlike aluminum cans, foil may have food particles attached, making it harder for recycling facilities to accept. But foil is easy to wipe clean. So reuse it as much as you can, and clean it off before putting it in the recycling bin. Consider buying 100% recycled aluminum foil. You'll be supporting a process that uses five percent less energy than the traditional aluminum foil manufacturing process.

### Steel Cans and Tin Cans (soup cans, veggie cans, coffee cans, etc.)

Most people call them "tin cans," but the containers your green beans come in are mostly made of steel. The term "tin" comes from the fact that these cans have a micro-thin coating of tin inside, to protect the flavor and prevent the can from corroding. How can you tell a steel or tin can from an aluminum one? See if a magnet attaches to it. Steel is magnetic, and aluminum is not. Steel cans make up about 90% of the U.S. food can market. Americans use about 100 million steel cans every day. That's 36.5 billion cans a year. About 71% of steel cans are recycled, making them one of the most recycled packaging products in America. In addition, steel cans typically contain at least 25% recycled steel, but many are made almost entirely of recycled steel.

**Where does this recycled steel come from?** Mainly from scrap metal. Recycling steel saves at least 75% of the energy it would take to create steel from raw materials. That's enough energy to power 18 million homes. During the recycling process, steel cans (in bales or loose) are fed into the furnaces of a steel mill or foundry. They may be mixed with new steel.

## How Paper is Recycled:

1. The cardboard is re-pulped and the fibers are separated and bleached. This is a chemical process involving hydrogen peroxide, sodium silicate, and sodium hydroxide.
2. The fibers are screened and cleaned to eliminate contaminants.
3. The fibers are washed to remove leftover ink.
4. Fibers are pressed and rolled into paper.
5. The rolls of paper are then converted into boxes or made into new products.

## How Is Glass Recycled?

The glass is taken to a manufacturing or recycling plant where it is broken up into smaller pieces known as "cullet." The cullet is crushed, sorted, cleaned, and prepared to be mixed with other raw materials.

When glass is produced from virgin materials, it requires high temperatures to melt and combine all the ingredients. Since cullet melts at a lower temperature, the more of it you add to a batch of raw materials, the less energy needed to melt it. Ceramics such as coffee cups and plates present a problem in the glass-making process because they can weaken the glass. Even a small amount of ceramics can contaminate a whole batch of glass and cost the glassmaker millions of dollars.

## WHAT NOT TO RECYCLE

Not all glass can be recycled. The following items should not be placed into your recycling bin:

1. Any glass contaminated with stones, dirt, and food waste
2. Ceramics, such as dishware, ovenware, and decorative items
3. Heat-resistant glass, such as Pyrex
4. Mixed colors of broken glass
5. Mirror or window glass
6. Metal or plastic caps and lids
7. Crystal
8. Light bulbs
9. Cathode-ray tubes (CRTs) found in some televisions and computer monitors

