



DEVELOPED BY PLANET ARK

Workplace Recycling Guide

Simple steps to reduce waste, improve recycling and get your workplace involved in National Recycling Week.



winc.[®]



Why workplace recycling matters

Small actions, taken together, create a big impact

Every workplace produces waste. What happens next is up to the people in the room.

Businesses generate significant volumes of waste every day, and while recycling has become second nature for many of us at home, it's not always available or accessible in the workplace environment. Simple changes to how organisations collect and sort waste can make a huge difference.

Getting recycling right at work isn't about a single big initiative, it's the accumulation of every day choices, such as how bins are set up, what's purchased and whether staff know where each material goes to ensure it gets recycled. Workplaces sit alongside households, schools and communities as an important part of Australia's shift towards a circular economy, and every office has a role to play in keeping valuable materials in the cycle and out of landfill.

What's in this guide:

- Starting where you are
- Set up your recycling system
- Understand your impact
- Expand your recycling
- Go a step beyond
- Buy recycled
- Engage your team
- Measure and improve

Start where you are

Setting up a recycling hub

You don't need to overhaul your waste contract to get started. Begin with a quick assessment of your building.

1. Find out what can already be recycled

Start by looking into what recycling services are available in your building and local area. Most recyclers provide co-mingled recycling bins, making it easy to recycle the same materials you would at home. Common workplace recycling streams may include:

- Paper and cardboard
- Plastic bottles and containers
- Glass bottles and jars
- Aluminium and steel cans
- Milk and juice cartons

2. Understand your waste

A waste audit will help you identify what your workplace throws away, how much is currently being recycled and which materials could be captured for recycling. You'll find waste audit options further down in this guide.

3. Know your services

Talk to your building management or sustainability team about what your current contractor already collects, and whether that service can be expanded if needed. You may also find local drop off recycling schemes suitable for your workplace at recyclingnearyou.com.au.



Quick wins to start today

Removing individual bins from under desks has been shown to increase recycling rates. For example, when the University of Queensland switched to a shared waste station, their recycling rate nearly tripled.* Set up at least two communal bins (general waste and mixed recycling) somewhere visible and easy to access as a start.

Add clear signage near the bin opening. Signs showing what shouldn't go in recycling bins can be more effective at reducing contamination than signs only showing what belongs.

DOWNLOAD



*University of Queensland, 2021-2025 Sustainability Strategy

TIP: Choose “I’m recycling from **WORK**” when using the search function.



**NATIONAL
RECYCLING
WEEK**
PLANET ARK

winc.

Set up your recycling system

Build recycling that works

Once you know what your workplace generates, make recycling easy for everyone by creating a convenient, clearly labelled system.

1. Put the right bins together

Place your general waste and recycling bins next to each other in an accessible location. This reduces the effort required to recycle and makes it easier for people to make the right decision when at the bin.

2. Location

Put the collection points where waste is generated, e.g. paper and printer cartridge recycling next to the printer, food waste collection in the kitchen.

3. Responsibility

Make sure everyone knows who is responsible for emptying, storing and arranging collection.



For office and industrial recycling bins, stations and solutions for hard-to-recycle materials...

HEAD TO [WINC.COM.AU](https://winc.com.au)

COMMON RECYCLING STREAMS THAT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED:

Click on icons for more information!



PAPER AND CARDBOARD

Separate collection may be a condition from your recycler.



FOOD SCRAPS

Consider an organics collection service, staff collection or other suitable option.



SPECIALISED RECYCLING

Create dedicated collection points for items like batteries and cartridges.

Understand your impact

Find out more about your waste with an audit

You can't manage what you don't measure, making a waste audit a great way to fully understand what types of waste your workplace is generating and how to manage it.

It will also clarify your primary waste-reduction priorities and provide a baseline to measure improvements. There are a couple of ways you can estimate your waste:

Option 1: Quick estimate

- Check the skip or wheelie bins the day before collection
- Estimate how full each bin is
- Multiply by the number of times the bin is collected in the working year for an annual estimate.

Option 2: Full sort

- Suitable for smaller workplaces
- After lunch or towards the end of the day, collect all the office bins into one area and pour out onto a tarp
- Sort into streams - organics, paper, soft plastics, hard plastics, glass, metals and cans
- Weigh each stream (it's a good idea to repeat these steps on different days and average totals)
- Calculate your annual waste production e.g. multiply the average totals by the number of days spent in the office per week, then multiply by the number of working weeks in the year.

Option 3: Get help

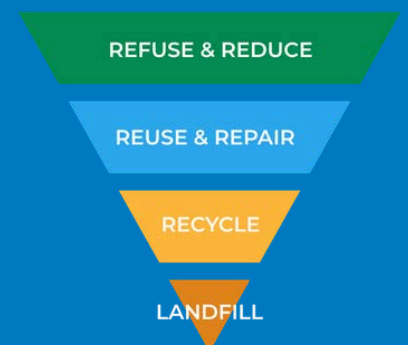
Specialised consultants and major waste contractors can conduct waste audits for you.

Reuse before you recycle

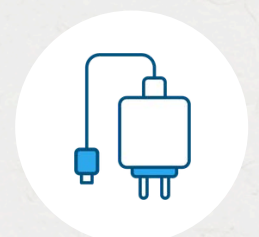
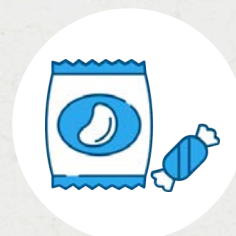
Did you know it's better to reuse than recycle?

'Reuse' is close to the top of the 'waste hierarchy'. Generally, the higher up the waste hierarchy, the bigger the positive impact on our environment.

You can make a positive impact in the workplace by choosing to reuse whenever possible- like buying second-hand instead of brand new.



FIND OUT MORE



Expand your recycling

Ready to take the next step?

Once the basics are working, look at other materials your workplace produces regularly. The goal isn't necessarily to recycle everything you use, it's to create a system that captures materials safely, conveniently and consistently.

SIGN UP FOR FREE RECYCLING UNITS

There are numerous recycling programs in Australia that workplaces can use to collect various materials for recycling, including:

Printer Cartridges

Cartridges 4 Planet Ark accepts all cartridges and toners, with a zero waste to landfill guarantee.



Mobile Phones

MobileMuster provides free collection units and pick up services for some organisations. All mobile phone brands and accessories are accepted.



Coffee Pods

Coffee pod and capsule recycling can be seamlessly integrated into your workplace sustainability efforts.

In addition, your workplace can set up a collection point for other items that have specialised recycling services.

Discover recycling services and disposal information for almost anything at recyclingnearyou.com.au. Some recycling services are free, while others may charge a fee.

REMINDER: Choose "I'm recycling from **WORK**" when using the search function.



**FIND YOUR LOCAL SERVICES
RECYCLINGNEARYOU.COM.AU**

Go a step beyond

Make your workplace a recycling hotspot.

With a little effort, offices can even become recycling hotspots by hosting drop-off points for items. By doing so, you will be providing a service not just to your employees, but to your local community too.

Explore additional recycling streams

Batteries

Batteries 4 Planet Ark provides a fire-proof collection box. Once it's full, pick up can be arranged anywhere in Australia.



Recycling and Reuse Drop-Off Wall

If you have a large workplace, or public facing foyer, you might consider the Recycling and Reuse Drop-Off Wall. This is a locker-style unit that allows individuals and businesses in your area to drop off hard-to-recycle materials that cannot be placed in kerbside collection bins.

They focus on materials that have established Product Stewardship schemes and/or processing, that Planet Ark verifies have circular-focused solutions in place.



DID YOU KNOW?

Small quantities of computers and accessories can be recycled for free through the **National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme**. Larger volumes will require a commercial recycler. Find out more and search for recycling options at recyclingnearyou.com.au.

Choosing the right recycler

What do you need to consider when choosing a new recycler? Check out Planet Ark's Choosing the Right Recycling Checklist.

LEARN MORE



NATIONAL
RECYCLING
WEEK
PLANET ARK

winc.

Buy recycled

Closing the loop

Buying products made from recycled materials is critical to closing the loop and supporting Australia's recycling and manufacturing industries.

Choosing recycled products helps create demand for the materials collected through recycling programs. It also saves energy and water, reduces the need for virgin materials and mining, and diverts waste from landfill.

You may come across the terms 'post-consumer' or 'pre-consumer'. **Post-consumer** recycled content means the materials sourced were collected *after* being used by consumers. This reduces the consumption of virgin resources and generally provides greater circular economy and waste-diversion benefits. **Pre-consumer** recycled content means the material is sourced *before* it has been turned into a product and consumed, such as manufacturing scrap. It does not necessarily contribute to a circular materials system but still reduces the use of virgin resources.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can source recycled products from **Winc**. From recycled **copy paper**, **notebooks** and **washroom paper** to **markers**, **keyboards** and **chairs**, these products give recovered materials a new life. By choosing recycled alternatives where practical, workplaces can help move Australia from the inefficient 'make, use, dispose' economy to a circular economy, where resources are kept in the productive economy.



Winc Earth Carbon Neutral 100% Recycled Copy Paper uses 100% post-consumer waste fibre and is PEFC recycled certified. The packaging is also 100% recycled fibre.

Attitudes to sustainability

74% of Australian businesses report implementing policies or strategies to operate more sustainably.*

60% of Australians are more likely to buy a product with recycled materials, over a product without.^

Over half of Australians (53%) want to make changes to increase recycling rates at work.^



*Planet Ark, *Business Attitudes to Recycling*, 2025
^Pollinate research commissioned by Planet Ark, 2021

For a range of
**recycled
products...**

HEAD TO WINC.COM.AU



NATIONAL
RECYCLING
WEEK
PLANET ARK

winc.

Engage your team

Recycling works better when everyone knows what to do

Good recycling systems need more than bins. Give your team clear information, convenient options and regular reminders to help new habits become part of everyday workplace life. Here are three easy ways to start:

Click on icons to access!



1. RECYCLING TRIVIA

Learn some fun facts and interesting truths about our relationship with waste.



2. PRESENTATIONS

We've developed three ready-to-go presentations with suggested scripts.



3. SUPPORT A CAUSE

Use container deposit schemes or donate directly as a way for your office to support a cause you care about.

Behaviour Change Tips

Staff training:

When establishing a new program, ensure that you factor in a staff training element. It should include clear information about what the program aims to achieve, why it's being undertaken and, most important of all, exactly what is expected of each staff member.

Repeat and empower:

Once you've provided recycling education or training, keep the conversation going. It can be as simple as having five minutes in every monthly team meeting for staff to bring ideas on how to reduce waste or buy sustainably. This encourages people to hunt for ideas via social media (or perhaps sign up to sustainability newsletters).

Tips to your inbox:

Get the latest behaviour change and sustainability tips for workplaces by signing up to Planet Ark's GreenWorks newsletter.

SUBSCRIBE TO GREENWORKS

Measure and improve

Keep the cycle going



Recycling is an ongoing process. Start where you are, track what's working and look for opportunities to improve.

Set a recycling goal based on your starting point and check your progress over time. Look at what you're recycling, collection frequency, costs, participation and contamination.

As your workplace becomes more confident with the basics, look for your next opportunity - whether that's introducing a new recycling stream, improving signage, making collection points more convenient or reducing the amount of waste going to landfill.

Communicating your success

Communicating the success of your recycling program will show that their efforts are leading to worthwhile results.

Using goals, record keeping and reporting, you can:

- Set measurable, achievable, time-bound goals, whether it be tonnes diverted from landfill or money raised from beverage container collections
- Review and report on progress against your major goals



Keep the cycle going and check out other ways to participate in [National Recycling Week](#).