

This activity is intended to give you a better idea of the different materials you discard on a regular basis. Gather materials from the garbage and recycling bins. Sort your materials into various categories. See category ideas below and modify this worksheet with the categories that apply to your household. Calculate how much of each material you use on a weekly and yearly basis. Discuss the items that are preventable, recyclable, or compostable, as well as the items that need to go in the garbage and why. Remember that even though an item might be recyclable or compostable, it still has an environmental impact when it's produced that is not completely offset by recycling or composting. Finding ways to reduce the use of unnecessary materials, regardless of recyclability or compostability, helps conserve natural resources.

Check WashingtonCountyRecycles.com for more information or contact us at recycle@co.washington.or.us with questions.

Material	Category	Count (#) of items	Weight (wt)	How many days of discarding does this represent? Divide your counts/wts by this number and multiply by 7 to get a week's worth of data.	# or wt per week	# or wt per year	Where should this item be discarded? Garbage bin, mixed recycling bin, glass recycling bin, BottleDrop redemption, backyard compost pile, drop-off recycling center, etc?	If this ended up in the garbage, what was the reason? Is there a way to prevent this waste in the first place?
Food	Food scraps not normally eaten like peels, seeds, trimmings, bones, eggshells							
Food	Food that was edible							
Glass	Glass Bottles/Jars - recyclable							
Glass	Glass - non-recyclable like vases, drinking glasses, candle jars, etc							
Metal	Metal cans							
Metal	Aluminum foil							
Metal	Metal lids and caps; other scrap metal							
Paper	Office paper, newspaper, scrap paper							
Paper	Magazines, catalogs							
Paper	Paperboard: tubes (toilet roll/paper towel roll); boxes like cookie, cracker, shoeboxes, etc							
Paper	Soiled papers like napkins, tissues, paper towels							
Paper/plastic	Take-out boxes from restaurants/grocery							

[illegible]