

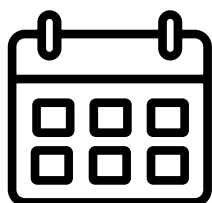
How to carry out a waste audit

Before you get started...



Check exactly what can and can't be recycled by our Commercial Waste Service

Take this opportunity to re-familiarise yourself and see if there are any new items now accepted for recycling. You can find this information on the website www.severnwaste.com/envirosort/what-can-i-recycle. Keep this information handy to check any materials you are unsure of when doing your waste audit.



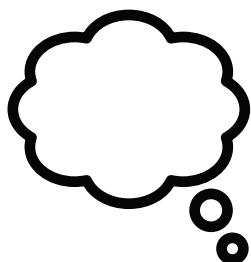
Decide how many days you will do your waste audit over

We suggest a week but it's up to you. You might want to tie it in with your bin collection day. Remember it should be a typical time period so don't do anything you wouldn't normally do.



Know what you are including in your waste audit

For a true reflection of your waste we recommend including everything - that means recyclable and non-recyclable waste. However, you may want to focus on one container/material at a time i.e. all plastic waste or all non-recyclable waste.



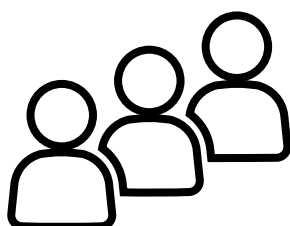
Think about how you will carry out the waste audit

There are two main ways of doing it.

Option 1: Record as you go by taking a note of every item as you throw it out. Just make sure you have the audit log in a handy place.

Option 2: Once a bin is full or has reached the end of the time period set by you - tip it out and sort through each item.

This method involves a bit more planning but it is a real eye opener when you see the volume of how much you're throwing away.



Get the whole business involved

Ensure everyone in your business knows what they need to do. Why not make posters to remind everyone to record anything they are throwing away!

Time to get started

Use the waste audit log sheet

Print it off or draw out your own version. Log every item, you may choose to group items such as cardboard packaging together and separate others such as plastic bottles, yogurt pots, plastic food trays.

When noting if items are recyclable or not, it's important to be aware of what can and cannot be recycled through your recycling collection - so remember to check what you can recycle on the Severn Waste website first. Some items can be recyclable but not collected by us, therefore you may consider alternative one off recycling options in the future.

Leave the final column 'the next step to zero waste' until you have completed your waste audit. Then look to identify at least one improvement you can make on each waste item you have categorised.

Item	Quantity	Item is recyclable through your commercial waste collection? Yes/No If unsure, check the Severn Waste website.	If item cannot be recycled at work, can it be recycled elsewhere? Yes/No Check the Severn Waste website for the correct way to dispose of it.	The next step to zero waste i.e. Stop buying, buy less, buy loose or find an alternative.
E.g. Cardboard packaging	I	Yes	N/A	Flatten all cardboard packaging to allow more space for recycling.
Liquid cartons	IIII	Yes	N/A	Flatten cartons and plastic lids into recycling separately.
Plastic packaging	III	Maybe	Yes, certain types of plastic can be recycled, see the Severn waste website.	Collect plastic film separately for recycling.
Cooking oil	I	No	Yes, contact specialist oil collector.	Contact specialist oil collector.

Plastics

Which plastics are recyclable is a complex issue but as technology improves more and more plastics are. To understand which of your plastics are recyclable, read and print off the online fact sheet at <https://www.severnwaste.com/downloads/education/plastic-recycling-facts.pdf> Any plastic unsuitable for recycling must be placed in a general waste bin.

What next?

Little changes go a long way. Decide what your next steps are and what improvements you want to focus on from the things you have identified. Why not challenge yourself with a bigger goal to reduce the overall number of non-recyclable items.

Carry out a waste audit monthly or quarterly and track your progress.

Get sharing

We'd love to see your waste audit in action and hear about your achievements so please share your photos and results on our social media channels.

