

# Litter, waste and recycling

Managing waste is a gigantic task with huge environmental and economic costs affecting us all. To really move towards sustainable resource management we must change our attitude towards recycling and take responsibility for the rubbish we produce.

**FACT: In the UK we recycle just over a fifth of our waste – one of the lowest rates in Europe. (Defra) Nearly 70% of what we put into our dustbins could be recycled or composted. Some items are more difficult or expensive to recycle, but many, such as glass bottles and jars, metal cans, newspapers and textiles are easy to recycle at a local recycling centre.**

**FACT: Schools dispose of over 600,000 tonnes of waste each year. (Defra)**

**Follow the waste hierarchy and you really can make a difference.**

**Prevent.** How can you eliminate waste from your school?

**Reduce.** How can you avoid creating waste? One of the best ways of achieving a 'slim' bin is to avoid waste in the first place. Buy concentrated products and refills. Don't buy disposable items, for example 'one-use' cameras or disposable nappies. Register with the Mailing Preference Service to avoid unwanted junk mail. Log on to [www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk)

**Reuse.** Can an item be used again for its original purpose or an alternative one? Many of the things which we throw away as 'rubbish' are in fact useful items which could be used again.

**Recover.** (recycle, compost, and recover energy) Is your trash another persons treasure? Recycling provides a real opportunity to put less rubbish in landfill, however it needs your participation to succeed by sorting recyclable materials. Why not compost? Up to one third of the contents of your bin can be composted. Tel: (0845) 073 2001 or visit [www.recyclenow.com/compost](http://www.recyclenow.com/compost) for further details.

**Disposal.** Last resort!

Did you know you can reduce waste production by as much as 20%, often with little or no capital investment (Sustainable Development Commission). For more information have a look at reduce, reuse and recycle, your green guide [www.reduceuserecycle.co.uk](http://www.reduceuserecycle.co.uk) where there is a very helpful guide on local recycling.



**Helping Hand**  
Environmental

HH a division of The Helping Hand Company