



Rethink React: Waste at McGill

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McGill challenges you to **rethink** your daily habits and **react** by reducing, reusing, recycling and encouraging other people around you to do so!

Why is sorting important?

Landfills are a major contributor to climate change. Not only do they increase the risk of soil, water and air pollution, they also release a mixture of greenhouse gases such as methane - a greenhouse gas with 25 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide!

That is why the McGill Department of Buildings and Grounds encourages you to avoid landfilling by **rethinking** the way you consume and **reacting** by always following the waste hierarchy before throwing something away.

*Can I **Reduce** it?*

Rethink your use of non reusable items. **React** at the time of purchase (do I *really* need to create this waste?)

Remember: The best way to use the waste system is to **avoid using the waste system.**

*Can I **Reuse** it?*

Rethink your relationship to your stuff. **React** by bringing your reusable items or donating things you no longer need.

*Can I **Recycle** it?*

Rethink before putting something in the trash. **React** to recycle better and more often. Learn how to sort, and help close the loop by purchasing recycled and recyclable products.

Remember: Sort recyclables properly to avoid bin contamination. Putting non-recyclable items into the recycling bins can contaminate the whole bag, forcing it to be landfilled.



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How to sort

1. Learn how to use the 4 waste streams and become familiar with the new bin signage!

At McGill University, signage on all public facing bins has been standardized to facilitate recovery and improve waste sorting. Learn how to use it!

[Learn more about the signage standardization.](#)



+ Paper/Cardboard: Must be **CLEAN** and **DRY** (no food soiled paper)

YES :

- Paper
- Cardboard (flatten boxes)
- Newspaper
- Magazines
- Egg cartons and coffee trays

NO :

- Disposable coffee cups
- Paper products which are dirty or wet
- Paper products stained with food or grease (these should go in the compost bin!)

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+ **Mixed Recycling:** Container must be **EMPTY**

For plastics, look for the Resin code (triangle made up of three arrows) on the bottom of the item

YES:

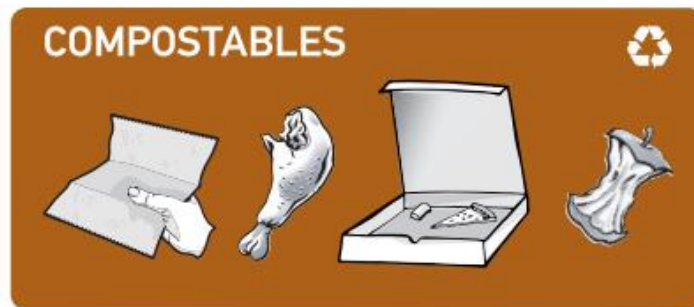
- Plastics #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
- Metal cans
- Glass bottles
- Milk or juice containers (“Tetrapack”)
- Tin foil

NO:

- Disposable coffee cups
- Plastic #6
- Any other plastic not marked with a number
- Plastic cutlery or plates
- Plastic beer cups
- Plastic coffee creamers
- Styrofoam
- Broken glass

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+ Compostables:

YES:

- Fruits and veggies
- Meat and fish (including bones)
- Leftovers
- Tea bags and coffee grounds, including filters
- Cardboard containers, paper plates and pizza boxes
- Plastic marked “compostable” (#7 PLA)
- Newspaper, napkins, tissue and paper towel

NO:

- Non-compostable plastics, including oxo-biodegradable plastics
- Paper towel soiled with inorganic chemical products
- Animal waste
- Plasticized cardboard

Where can I compost?

The McGill Buildings and Grounds Department has launched their [first compostables collection pilot project in the McConnell Engineering Building!](#)

McGill Food and Dining Services also have a compostables stream in their dining halls. Visit their [Composting website for more information.](#)

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+ Landfill:

When in **doubt**, throw it **out**. It's better to throw something away than to potentially contaminate a whole bag of well-sorted recycling. If recycling is too contaminated, it will not be picked up.

YES:

- Any item that you are not sure about
- Disposable coffee cups
- Food waste (when there is no compostables bin)
- Plastic #6
- Plastic that has no number (utensils, plates, creamers etc)
- Styrofoam
- Anything else that is not recyclable

What about items not listed in the four streams?

Hazardous waste

[Hazardous Waste Management](#) provides a full hazardous material disposal service to the McGill community at both Macdonald and Downtown Campus.

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