

# Too Much Packaging is a Waste



## 5 ways to buy less trash

### Buy this

### Not this *because...*

- 1 Juice concentrate..... Juice boxes *create more packaging waste.*
- 2 Can of tuna..... A foil package *isn't recyclable.*
- 3 Box of crackers ..... Cracker snack packs *create more packaging waste.*
- 4 Can of condensed soup ..... Ready to eat soup *creates more packaging waste.*
- 5 Jar of applesauce..... A single-serving cup *isn't recyclable.*

# About 30% of our trash is packaging

In 2006, the Environmental Protection Agency estimated that the United States produced 12.6 million tons of plastic packaging. Almost 90 percent of this packaging was thrown away.

(Source: Municipal Solid Waste in the United States: 2006 Facts and Figures, U.S. EPA (11/07))

## Think about packaging

- Buy items with the least packaging.
- Buy large containers of items or from bulk bins whenever practical.
- Avoid individually wrapped items, snack packs and single-serve containers; buy a larger quantity instead and use a reusable container you can wash and use again.
- Be aware of double-packaging — some “bulk packages” are just individually wrapped items packaged yet again and sold as a bulk item. You’ll be getting a lot more packaging than expected, and you don’t always save money!
- Pass on packages with added ‘promotional’ or ‘bonus’ items you don’t need.
- Buy unpackaged fruits and vegetables such as tomatoes, garlic, and mushrooms.
- Avoid pre-measured items such as single-serve drink mixes, coffee grounds sealed in filter packs and juice boxes/pouches. Buy larger containers of these instead.
- Ask the store to keep clothing hangers and encourage the store to reuse them.
- When buying items such as dinnerware, look for “open stock” instead of boxed sets. It also allows you to check the quality of each item before you take it home.
- Purchase items such as dish soap and laundry detergents in concentrate.

## Think about waste

### Paper nor plastic

- Go bagless—do you need to bag a milk jug?
- A cloth bag is an investment that can be used repeatedly for any type of shopping.
- If you have to use paper or plastic, pick one that you’ll use again. Then recycle it when you’re finished using it!

### Think reusable

- When you pack a lunch, put food and beverages in reusable containers.
- Take a reusable coffee mug to work or school.
- Rethink single-use items such as razors, foil baking pans, plastic cups and utensils — buy reusable items instead.
- Avoid travel size personal care products. Buy a reusable container you can refill each trip.
- When travelling, bring a small bottle of dish soap along to wash reusable cups and containers.

Buy this .....not this, because



*too much packaging is a waste.*



**Hennepin County**  
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[hennepin.us/reduce\\_waste](http://hennepin.us/reduce_waste)



Your go-to guide for recycling  
and waste management.