

Waste sort guide

A waste sort is a process used to assess your household's waste. The sort is part of understanding how much and what kind of waste your family is generating. For the waste sort, you will collect and set aside waste for an entire week. At the end of the week, you will sort the waste to better understand what your household is generating and how well you are sorting your waste.

Pre-sort

- Prepare for sorting organics/compostable goods.
 - Make space in your refrigerator or freezer to store the organics you'll collect over the week
 - Go over organics collection with your household and make the collection point clear to all!
- Determine a spot to store the waste. Do not put waste in your cart; set them aside in your garage or basement to be sorted later.
- Identify and add bins for "gross factor" wastes like pet poop and other wastes. Your future self will thank you. It's only for a week, so use what you have, such as an old bucket or simply a plastic bag next to the trash.

Collect waste

- Collect for seven days – from trash day to trash day. **Try to follow your typical habits.**
- On the last day, go through the fridge to identify any food that's spoiled that you'll need to count in the sort.
- Set aside the waste from these seven days for the sort, and resume your regular habits.

Complete the sort

1. Set up your sorting space.
 - a. Select hard surface such as a table, floor, or outside if weather permits.
 - b. Lay out plastic tarp to make cleanup easy.
 - c. Find a camera. Make sure camera has battery or is charged.
2. Lay out the recycling
 - a. Re-sort the pile to pull out any trash, compostable items, household hazardous waste items, or reusable/repairable items.
 - b. Weigh each of the categories, and record them in the waste sort tracking sheet.
 - c. Take pictures of the groups of items.
3. Lay out all the trash
 - a. Re-sort the pile to pull out any recyclable items, compostable items, household hazardous waste items, or reusable/repairable items.
 - b. Weigh each of the categories, and record them in the waste sort tracking sheet.
 - c. Take pictures of the groups of items
4. Lay out the organics
 - a. Re-sort the pile to pull out any trash, recyclable items, household hazardous waste items, or reusable/repairable items.
 - b. Weigh each of the categories, and record them in the waste sort tracking sheet.
 - c. Take pictures of the groups of items

Waste Sort Data Tracking Sheet

RECYCLING			
Material	Weight (lbs)	Total Weight	Proportion (%)
Trash		T=	T/TOTAL=
Recycling (plastic, metal, glass, paper, cardboard, cartons)		R=	R/TOTAL=
Organics (food, paper towel and soiled paper waste)		O=	O/TOTAL=
Household hazardous waste (batteries, paint, aerosol cans, electronics, etc.)		HHW=	HHW/TOTAL=
Reuseable, donate, or repair items		Reuse=	Reuse/TOTAL=
Other (pre-sorted streams)		Alt=	Alt/TOTAL=
		TOTAL=	

TRASH			
Material	Weight (lbs)	Total Weight	Proportion (%)
Trash		T=	T/TOTAL=
Recycling (plastic, metal, glass, paper, cardboard, cartons)		R=	R/TOTAL=
Organics (food, paper towel and soiled paper waste)		O=	O/TOTAL=
Household hazardous waste (batteries, paint, aerosol cans, electronics, etc.)		HHW=	HHW/TOTAL=
Reuseable, donate, or repair items		Reuse=	Reuse/TOTAL=
Other (pre-sorted streams)		Alt=	Alt/TOTAL=
		TOTAL=	

ORGANICS/COMPOSTABLE ITEMS			
Material	Weight (lbs)	Total Weight	Proportion (%)
Trash		T=	T/TOTAL=
Recycling (plastic, metal, glass, paper, cardboard, cartons)		R=	R/TOTAL=
Organics (food, paper towel and soiled paper waste)		O=	O/TOTAL=
Household hazardous waste (batteries, paint, aerosol cans, electronics, etc.)		HHW=	HHW/TOTAL=
Reuseable, donate, or repair items		Reuse=	Reuse/TOTAL=
Other (pre-sorted streams)		Alt=	Alt/TOTAL=
		TOTAL=	

Diversion pre-sort	$(\text{Total Recycling} + \text{Total Organics/Compostable}) / (\text{Total Recycling} + \text{Total Organics/Compostable} + \text{Total Trash})$
Potential Diversion	$(R + R + R + O + O + O) / (\text{Total Recycling} + \text{Total Organics/Compostable} + \text{Total Trash})$