

Reducing waste



After properly disposing of all the waste you currently create, you can begin to take a look at where you can prevent it in the first place. Remember that zero waste is not just about moving items out of the trash but reducing what goes into your recycling and organics recycling as well. Not creating waste in the first place is always better than recycling it!

If you haven't done so already, note which materials you still have in abundance. You can conduct another informal waste audit by going through your waste streams again. Use the worksheets at the end of this document to help lay out your goals and monitor your progress.

Once you've evaluated your waste, ask yourself the following questions and choose your goals:

- What is left in my trash? What do I have the most of in my recycling and organics?
- What can I change about my waste?
- Are there certain areas of the house that will be easier than others to reduce waste in?
- What are my reasons for trying to reduce waste, in order to prioritize my actions? (again, think about what matters: health, cost, environment, de-cluttering, etc.)

The following section includes a breakdown of how to reduce waste from different areas of the home - including the kitchen, bathroom, laundry room and garage - as well as when it comes to kids, pets, traveling, cleaning, remodeling and hosting gatherings.