

Reuse and recycling A-Z

An A to Z of items to help you dispose of an item sustainably.

It is always best to reduce, reuse or recycle items, rather than throwing them in the rubbish bin.

If there is an item which is not listed below, please email recycle@lewisham.gov.uk.

Find out how to donate your unwanted furniture (or any household items) to charitable organisations in the local area or give it away: www.lewisham.gov.uk/donateitems

- To dispose of larger items such as chairs, sofas, beds, and carpets, we provide a collection service for up to four items for a small fee. Fridges and freezers will also be collected for a fee. For further information and booking: www.lewisham.gov.uk/largeitems
- Mattresses are also collected for a fee, for further details and to book a collection, please visit: www.lewisham.gov.uk/mattresscollection
- Hazardous waste cannot be disposed of with your normal household waste because it may be dangerous to human health or the environment. The City of London provides a hazardous household waste collection service to help you safely dispose of asbestos and boxed chemicals including paint. If you want to arrange a collection or would like more information regarding this service please [visit the City of London's website](#) or call them on 020 7332 3433.
- Licenced Waste Carriers - If you are a householder or a business working with waste, you have a duty of care to ensure that your waste is managed properly. The law requires anyone dealing with waste to keep it safe, make sure it's dealt with responsibly and only give it to businesses authorised to take it. For further information, please check this link: www.lewisham.gov.uk/lwc
- Lewisham Council Reuse and Recycling Centre, Landmann Way, New Cross, SE14 5RS. The Centre open hours are: Sunday–Friday 8am–3.30pm (vans last entry at 3pm) and Saturday 8am–11.30am (vans last entry at 11am). For further details and to book a slot, please follow this link: www.lewisham.gov.uk/landmannway
- Lewisham residents can also take their unwanted items to the Reuse and Recycling Centres in [Bromley Council](#), there might be a few to pay, please contact them directly for further information.

**MAKE SURE ALL YOUR ITEMS ARE CLEAN
BEFORE PUTTING THEM IN THE RECYCLING BIN.**

A

Aerosol cans

Aerosols such as deodorant, furniture polish, air fresheners and hair spray can be put in your recycling bin. You can also recycle them at our Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Aluminium foil

Put clean aluminium foil and foil food trays in your recycling bin.

Aluminium cans

See 'cans'.

Asbestos

The City of London provides a hazardous household waste collection service to help you safely dispose of asbestos and boxed chemicals, including paint.

You can arrange a hazardous household waste collection and get more information on the [City of London's website](#). You can also call them on 020 7332 3433.

Ash

Cooled **wood ash** can be added to your home compost bin or heap as it contains valuable minerals which improve soil quality. **Make sure it has cooled down completely before adding it to your compost bin.**

Coal ash or anthracite should be bagged up and put in your rubbish bin since it has little or no nutritional benefit and can be harmful to soil, plants and consumers of edible produce. **Always let the ash cool down completely before placing it into your rubbish bin.**

Please do not take ash to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

B

Baby car seat

See 'Child car seat'.

Bags (fashion)

Reuse the bags, donate them to local charity shops, sell them online, or give them to family and friends.

Batteries

You cannot place batteries in your household bins. You can recycle your household batteries at some:

- Libraries
- Pharmacies
- Supermarkets
- High street retailers that sell batteries
- Schools (for their pupils and their parents).

Use rechargeable batteries if you can – you can even buy a solar powered recharger. Try to buy appliances that use renewable energy – a wind-up radio or torch, dynamo or solar powered bicycle lights are all good.

Batteries (car)

Car batteries can be disposed of at the Reuse and Recycling Centre. They can also be taken to authorised disposal centres such as [Halfords](#).

BBQs (disposable)

Disposable BBQs can be taken to the Reuse and Recycling Centre. Do not put them in your household bins.

Please note that disposable BBQs can potentially have a detrimental impact on the environment and wildlife.

Bedding (textiles)

Please don't put bedding in your household bins. Instead, you can:

- Donate them to a local charity shop or pet charity
- Give them away on [Freegle](#) or [Freecycle](#)
- Sell them online
- Give them to family or friends.

You can recycle clothes, shoes and fabric materials at textile banks across the borough. [Find a textile bank near you.](#)

Bicycles

If it is in working condition, you can:

- Take your bike to your local charity shop
 - Donate to [The Bike Project](#)
 - Give it away on [Freegle](#) or [Freecycle](#)
 - Or take it to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.
-

Biscuit/sweet tins

Reuse for storing homemade cakes, treats and biscuits. Or dispose of them in your recycling bin.

Blankets

Please don't put blankets in your household bin. Instead, you can:

- Donate them to a local charity shop
 - Put them in a textile bank - [find a textile bank near you](#)
 - Take them to an animal charity that accepts blankets
 - Give it away on [Freegle](#) or [Freecycle](#)
 - Or take them to our Reuse and Recycling Centre.
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Books

If the book is in good condition, you can:

- Take it to your local charity shop
- Take it to your local bookshop
- Give it away on [Freegle](#) or [Freecycle](#)
- Give it to a friend or family member.

Instead of buying new books why not [use your local library](#) or borrow them from a friend. You can also donate books at Crofton Park Library and Grove Park Library.

Bottles (glass)

Put glass bottles in your recycling bin. You can also take them to our Reuse and Recycling Centre. Please rinse and replace their lids before recycling glass bottles.

Bottles (plastic)

Plastic bottles such as milk, drinks, washing up liquid, shampoo, laundry detergent, and bleach bottles can go in your recycling bin. Before recycling, please wash and squash bottles and replace the lids (except pumps – see lids plastic for more information on plastic pumps).

Broom

Brooms cannot go in your recycling bin. Please take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Bubble wrap

You can recycle clean bubble wrap. Or reuse it, take it to a local charity shop to see if they want it for wrapping breakable goods. If you cannot find a use for it, put it in your recycling bin.

C

Cans

Put food and drink cans (aluminium and steel) in your recycling bin. You can also take cans to our reuse and recycling centre.

Please rinse them before recycling.

Car oil

Car oil can be recycled at the Reuse and Recycling Centre. Please make sure that you contain the oil in its original container.

Do not dispose oil containers in your recycling bin. Oil cannot be disposed of in your household bins.

Cardboard boxes

Cardboard boxes can go in your recycling bin. This includes corrugated cardboard, toothpaste boxes, tissue boxes, and delivery packaging. Large cardboard boxes must be flattened and placed in your recycling bin, or you can take them to our Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Please note that we do not collect wet or water damaged cardboard.

Cards

You can put greetings cards in your recycling bin. Some supermarkets recycle Christmas cards for a short time after Christmas. Cards with decorative glitter, ribbon/bows, and glue or musical attachments cannot be recycled, please put them in your rubbish bin.

Carpets and rugs

Please don't put carpets in your bins. You can recycle your old carpets and rugs at the Reuse and Recycling Centre. We can also collect your carpet or rug for a small fee. [Find out more about our large item collection service.](#)

Alternatively, if they are in good condition:

- You can sell them online
- Pass them on to friends or family
- Give away for free using a platform such as [Freegle](#) or [Freecycle](#)
- Donate to a [charity](#) or [re-use organisation](#) – many offer a local collection service (check their Covid restrictions).

If they have seen better days:

- Local gardening and allotment groups might take them off your hands as carpet is useful for insulating compost heaps and keeping weeds at bay on vegetable plots and paths. Wool rich carpets also make a very good mulch.
 - If you're building a garden pond, use old carpet to line it before you put the pond liner in – it protects the liner from sharp stones
 - Cut to size and use it to protect your car windscreen from frost.
 - Some carpet shops will take away your old carpet when they fit your new one.
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Carrier bags

You cannot put plastic carrier bags in your recycling bin. Please reuse carrier bags as many times as possible and try to remember to take them shopping with you so you don't have to pay for new bags.

Look out for plastic bag recycling points in supermarkets. Or reuse them to contain your rubbish.

Cartons (Tetra Pak)

Put soft drinks, milk, fruit juice and soup cartons in your recycling bin. You can also recycle cartons at the reuse and recycling centre.

Please wash, squash cartons, and replace the lids before recycling.

Catalogues

Store catalogues can go in your recycling bin with the rest of your paper.

You can [opt out of unwanted catalogues and junk mail by signing up to the Mail Preference Service](#).

CDs and DVDs

If your CDs and DVDs are in good condition you can take them to your local charity shop. You can put CD cases in your recycling bin. You can also take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre, or why not make them into 'bird scarers' for your allotment or garden.

DVD cases and CD/DVD discs cannot be recycled so if you cannot find a use for them, they will need to go in your rubbish bin.

Cereal boxes

Flatten down your cardboard cereal boxes and add them to your recycling bin. You cannot recycle the cereal box inner bag so it has to go in your rubbish bin.

Ceramics

Do not place ceramic items in your recycling bin. You can recycle ceramic items such as tiles at the Reuse and Recycling Centre in Bromley Council.

[Find out more about Bromley Council's Recycling Centres on their website.](#)

Chemicals

Hazardous waste cannot be disposed of in your normal household waste because it may be dangerous to human health or the environment. [Find out more about Hazardous Waste Disposal.](#)

The City of London provides a hazardous household waste collection service to help you safely dispose of asbestos and boxed chemicals, including paint.

You can arrange a hazardous household waste collection and get more information on the [City of London's website](#). You can also call them on 020 7332 3433.

Child car seat

You can take a baby or child car seat to the Reuse and Recycling Centre. Please do not dispose of them in your household bins.

- Pass it to a friend or family member
 - Give it away via [Freecycle](#) or [Freecycle](#)
-

China plates and ornaments

You cannot put china plates and ornaments in the recycling bin. If they are not broken, you can donate them to a charity shop or give them away. Put broken china in your rubbish bin.

Christmas trees

After Christmas, you can take your real Christmas tree to a collection point near you. [Find a Christmas tree collection point.](#)

If you have a garden waste bin, you can use it to recycle your real Christmas tree. Just cut it into pieces no bigger than 10cm thick and 50cm long. [Find out more about our garden waste collection service.](#) You can donate artificial trees to a charity shop or give them away. If it's broken, take it to Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Cling film

Put cling film in your rubbish bin. Reduce the amount of cling film you use by storing sandwiches and food in reusable plastic containers.

Clinical waste

[Find out how to get rid of clinical, healthcare and offensive waste.](#)

Clothing

Please don't put clothes in your bins. You can give unwanted clean clothes and textiles such as curtains or towels to charity shops. Animal shelters may also accept old bedding and towels.

You can also take clothes and textiles to our Reuse and Recycling Centre or to a textile bank. [Find a textile bank near you.](#)

Find more tips on how to revive, reduce, reuse or recycle clothes on the [Love Your Clothes website.](#)

Coffee cups

Most coffee shops now collect cups for recycling in store (even if you bought your coffee elsewhere). If you are out and about and cannot recycle it in a store, throw the cup in the rubbish bin and the lid in the recycling.

You could buy a reusable cup to reduce your waste. With many chains now offering money off your coffee if you bring in your own cup, over time you'll make a huge saving!

Coffee pods

Coffee pods cannot be placed in your recycling bin. You can put them in your rubbish bin. Many manufacturers provide home collections to recycle their coffee pods. Please contact the manufacturer to find out more.

Computers (mouse, keyboard, cables)

See 'Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)'

Cookers

You can take cookers to our Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Cooking oil

You can recycle your cooking oil at our Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Do not put cooking oil in your food waste bin. Do not pour cooking oil down the sink, toilet or drain as this might cause blockages.

Corks

Put plastic and synthetic corks in your rubbish bin. You can reuse natural corks (look online for options) or put them in your food waste bin or home composting.

Cotton buds

You cannot recycle cotton buds so only put them in your rubbish bin. Do not throw them down the drain as they are not biodegradable.

Crisp Packets

You cannot recycle crisp packets and other foil-like films such as chocolate bar and biscuit wrappers. They need to go in your rubbish bin. Crisp packets are made from a variety of plastics such as polypropylene, foil backed and laminates. Because of the mixture of different types of plastic, they are difficult to recycle.

Curtains

Please don't put curtains in your household bins. Donate them to local charity shops, sell them online, give them to family/friends or on [Freecycle](#) or [Freecycle](#). You can also take curtains to our Reuse and

Recycling Centre or a textile banks. [Find a textile bank near you.](#)

Find more tips on how to revive, reduce, reuse, or recycle clothes on the [Love Your Clothes website](#).

Cushions

You can give them away to friends and family, donate to a charity or give them away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freecycle](#).

Alternatively, you can remove the covers (donate them) and dispose of the cushions in your refuse bin.

Cutlery

You can take cutlery to our Reuse and Recycling Centre.

D

DIY

This includes items such as bathroom suits, flooring, kitchen cupboards, sinks, tiles and doors.

You can give DIY items away or get a licenced waste carrier to remove them. [Find out more about licensed waste carriers.](#)

You cannot put DIY waste in your household bins.

We do not accept DIY waste at our Reuse and Recycling Centre. You can take it to Bromley Council's Recycling Centres.

[Find out more about Bromley Council's Recycling Centres on their website.](#)

Drinks glasses

Put broken drinks glasses in your rubbish bin as they cannot be recycled. Please wrap the broken glass first to avoid sharp edges. You can take undamaged drinks glasses to a charity shop.

Dusters

You can wash and reuse dusters. When they are unusable put them in your rubbish bin.

Duvets

Donate duvets in good condition to local charity shops or homeless shelters. Some animal charities may accept duvets. You can also take duvets to our Reuse and Recycling Centre.

E

Egg boxes

You can put cardboard egg boxes in your recycling bin. You can also add them to your home compost.

Elastic bands

You cannot recycle elastic bands. If you cannot reuse them, put them in your rubbish bin.

Energy Saving Light Bulbs

Please see 'Light Bulbs'.

Envelopes

All paper envelopes can be placed in your recycling bin. Padded envelopes must go in your rubbish bin.

Engine oil

You can take small quantities of used engine oil to our Reuse and Recycling Centre to be recycled. You must take it in the original container and to clearly label it. This is so site staff know how to safely dispose of it.

F

Fabric

Reuse fabrics for dusters/cleaning clothes or upcycle them. You can also take fabric to our Reuse and Recycling Centre or a textile bank. [Find a textile bank near you.](#)

Find more tips on how to revive, reduce, reuse or recycle clothes on the [Love Your Clothes website](#).

Face visors

Put face visors in your rubbish bin. They are not recyclable.

Fence panels

Fence panels cannot be recycled in your household bins. Please arrange removal by a licenced waste carrier or take them to Bromley Council's Recycling Centres.

[Find out more about licensed waste carriers.](#)

[Find out more about Bromley Council's Recycling Centres on their website.](#)

Fire extinguishers

You can recycle fire extinguishers at our Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Fluorescent Lights

Please see 'Light Bulbs'.

Foam

You can put foam in your rubbish bin in small quantities. If you have a lot of foam, please take it to our Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Foil

See 'aluminium foil'.

Food packaging

See:

- Plastic pots, tubs and trays
 - Polystyrene
 - Polythene
 - Aluminium foil
 - Shrink wrap
 - Cling film
 - Glass bottles and jars.
-

Food tins

See 'cans'.

Food pouches

Food and drink pouches, for things like coffee, pet food and baby food cannot be recycled at home, they must go in the rubbish bin.

The good news is that some types/brands of pouches are collected by a company called [TerraCycle](#) who recycle them to create new products! Their website explains more about their scheme, what they collect and how you can get involved.

Food waste

You can compost most of your kitchen food waste (except cooked foods, meat and dairy). Otherwise, you will need to use your 23L food waste bin. Please do not use your refuse, recycling, or garden waste bin to dispose of your food waste. Bins that are contaminated with food waste will not be emptied.

If you live in a kerbside property, you can [order a food waste bin](#) on Lewisham Council's website. For advice and tips on how to make the most of your food and how to reduce your food waste, visit [Love Food Hate Waste website](#).

Fridges or freezers

If it is working well you can:

- Donate your fridge or freezer to the [British Heart Foundation](#).
- Give your fridge or freezer away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freegle](#)

We can also collect your old fridge or freezer for a small fee. [Book a fridge or freezer collection](#).

Alternatively, you can take them to our Reuse and Recycling Centre or Bromley Council's Recycling Centre. [Find out more about Bromley Council's Recycling Centres on their website](#).

Furniture

You can donate furniture and electrical appliances in good condition to the [British Heart Foundation](#). You can also give them away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freegle](#).

You can take furniture which cannot be reused to the Recycling Centre or you can book and pay for a [bulky waste collection](#).

G

Garden hose

You cannot put garden hoses in your bins. You can:

- Take them to a local charity shop
 - Give your old hose away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freegle](#)
 - Recycle your hose at our Reuse and Recycling Centre.
-

Garden furniture

You cannot put garden furniture in your bins. You can:

- Take garden furniture to a local charity shop
 - Give garden furniture away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freegle](#)
 - Recycle them at our Reuse and Recycling Centre
 - Or book and pay for a [bulky waste collection](#).
-

Garden pots (plastic, ceramic)

You cannot put garden pots in your recycling bin. You can:

- Take garden pots to a local charity shop
 - Give garden pots away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freegle](#)
 - Recycle them at the Reuse and Recycling Centre.
-

Garden waste (green waste only)

Garden waste includes grass cuttings, leaves, twigs, hedge trimmings, weeds (except Japanese knotweed, Rhododendron, Yew, Ragwort or Hemlock), flowers, plants, fallen fruit (small amount), house flowers, branches (no more than 10cm thick and 50cm long).

If you wish to subscribe for this service, please read more about our [garden waste bin subscription](#).

You can also take garden waste to our Reuse and Recycling Centre or [use a compost bin at home](#).

Gas (canisters, cylinders, bottles)

You can only recycle gas canisters, cylinders and bottles at our Reuse and Recycling Centre. Please do not put them in your household bins.

Glass bottles and jars

You can put glass bottles and jars in your recycling bin. You can also take them to a recycling bring site or our reuse and recycling centre. You can recycle clean metal lids and caps.

Please wash them before placing them in your recycling bin.

Glass (broken)

Please put in your rubbish bin. Wrap up broken glass to avoid sharp edges/pieces.

Glass panes

You cannot put glass panes in your recycling bin. It has a different composition from glass bottles and needs to be collected separately. Please wrap them up and put them in your rubbish bin or take them to Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Gloves (disposable)

You cannot recycle disposable plastic or silicone gloves. Please put them in your rubbish bin.

Gravel

You cannot put gravel in your bins. You can get it removed by a licenced carrier.

[Find out more about licensed waste carriers.](#)

You can also take it to either Bromley Recycling Centres.

[Find out more about Bromley Council's Recycling Centres on their website.](#)

Greaseproof/wax paper

Put greaseproof or wax paper in your rubbish bin as it cannot be recycled.

H

Hair dryer

See 'Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)'.

Hangers (clothes)

You cannot put clothes hangers in your recycling bin. They can be reused over and over again. Ask local charity shops if they need spare hangers for displaying clothes and take metal hangers back to the dry-cleaners to be reused. Some local high street retailers collect hangers for recycling.

Hard plastic

You cannot put hard plastic in the recycling bin. Hard plastic includes Tupperware, garden furniture, buckets, plant pots and toys.

You can:

- Take your items to a local charity shop
- Give your items away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freecycle](#)
- Take them to our Reuse and Recycling Centre
- Take them to Bromley Recycling Centres.

[Find out more about Bromley Council's Recycling Centres on their website.](#)

Hazardous waste

You cannot put hazardous waste with your normal household waste because it may be dangerous to human health or the environment. [Find out how to dispose of hazardous waste.](#)

I

Inhalers

Inhalers cannot be recycled from home and you should not throw them in the bin either. All used inhalers should be returned to your nearest pharmacy for them to dispose of safely.

Inhalers are thermally treated to destroy the greenhouse gases. This environmentally safe disposal route is available at all pharmacies and is paid for by NHS England.

Ink-jet cartridges

Put non-refillable ink-jet cartridges in your rubbish bin. Many charities and organisations will take your used printer cartridges to recycle or refill them.

J

Japanese knotweed

Japanese knotweed is harmful to the environment, extremely invasive and is difficult to kill. Read the Environment Agency's advice about invasive plants on the [Government's website](#).

Jars (glass)

See 'glass bottles and jars'.

Jewellery (gold/silver and fashion)

You can sell your jewellery online, give it away to friends and family, or donate to a local charity.

If your fashion jewellery is damaged, you can put them in your rubbish bin. If they are made of valuable metals (such as gold or silver), you could sell them as scrap.

Juice Cartons

See 'cartons'.

Juice bottles

See 'plastic bottles' or see 'glass bottles'

Junk mail

Put unwanted mail such as leaflets and unaddressed letters in your recycling bin. You can stop unwanted addressed mail on the [Mail Preference Service website](#).

K

Kettle (electric)

See 'Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)'

Kitchen roll tubes

You can put the cardboard inner tube of kitchen rolls in your recycling bin.

L

Laminated paper

Put laminated paper and cardboard in your rubbish bin.

Letters

Put letters in your recycling bin. We recommend you remove and shred any personal details before recycling. You can also add shredded paper to your home compost.

Lids (plastic)

You can put plastic lids in your recycling bin. Please wash and squash cartons and plastic bottles and replace the lids before you recycle them.

You cannot recycle trigger sprays (like those on cleaning product bottles) or bottle pumps (like those on soap bottles). Please remove them and put them in the rubbish bin.

Lids and caps (metal)

You can put clean metal lids and caps in your recycling bin.

Light bulbs

Energy saving light bulbs and fluorescent tubes contain small amounts of mercury, which is hazardous and cannot be put in your rubbish or recycling bin. Take your light bulbs to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Loo rolls inner tube

You can put the cardboard inner tube of toilet rolls in your recycling bin.

M

Magazines

You can give magazines away. Doctors, dental surgeries, and hairdressers usually need them. You can put magazines in your recycling bin or in the paper banks at the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Make-up/Cosmetics

Make-up such as eye shadow palettes, mascara, eye liner, blusher palettes, lipstick, lip-gloss etc. Make-up cannot be recycled in your green bin but can all be recycled at the shop in which it was purchased or the branded stores.

Maybelline, Elle, Superdrug and Boots currently provide a recycling service for all finished beauty containers, with the exception of aerosols, cardboard packaging, makeup brushes and nail polish.

Margarine tubs

You can put margarine tubs in your recycling bin but they are also good for storing food, instead of using cling film. Make sure to wash them before recycling.

Mask (disposable face masks)

You cannot recycle disposable face masks, please put them in your rubbish bin. If possible, break the loops of your disposable mask before putting them in the bin.

Mattresses

If it is in good condition you can give it to friends and family, a charity shop or give it away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freecycle](#).

You can also take your old mattress to our Reuse and Recycling Centre. If you buy a new one, ask the shop if they can take your old one away. We will also pick up your old mattress for a fee.

[Book a mattress collection](#).

Medicine

You can put empty medicine bottles in your recycling bin.

Tablet blisters must go in your rubbish bin, alternatively, you can dispose of them at the Superdrug store in Catford or Sydenham. Or at a branch that has a pharmacy inside.

Microwaves

If your microwave is still in working condition you can:

- Take it to a local charity shop
- Give your microwave away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freecycle](#)

If not, you can take it to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Microwave ready meal containers

You can recycle ready meal plastic containers, but black containers must go in the rubbish bin.

Milk bottles (plastic, glass)

You can put plastic and glass milk bottles in your recycling bin.

Please wash and squash the bottle and replace the lid before recycling.

Mirrors

If your mirror is in good condition you can:

- Take it to a local charity shop
- Give your mirror away on [Freegle](#) or [Freecycle](#)

Please don't put mirrors in your recycling bin.

If not, you can take it to the Reuse and Recycling Centre. We will also collect large mirrors for a small fee. [Book and pay for a large item collection.](#)

Mobile phone

Electricals are hazardous waste as they can contain toxic components. Please do not put them in your household bins.

You can donate your device, whether it is working or not, to [Lewisham Device Library](#), run by [Catbytes](#). Their team repair the devices, and perform factory resets of mobile phones and tablets, so they can be loaned out at the library. You can also take mobile phones to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Please note that we do not offer secure data removal and we do not protect the confidentiality of data. It is your responsibility to make sure your data is removed from old devices.

Mop

You cannot recycle mops. Please place mops heads in your rubbish bin (without the handle). You can take it with the handle to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

N

Nail polish

Nail and gel polish are not recyclable, so the best thing to do is use them up.

Nail varnish is highly flammable so please do not put in your household rubbish bin. You can dispose of it for free through the [City of London](#) hazardous waste service.

Nappies (cloth, real nappies)

You can give cloth nappies away or donate them at the nearest textile bank.

[Find a textile bank near you.](#)

Nappies (plastic, disposable)

You can put disposable nappies in your rubbish bin.

You could change to real nappies to reduce the amount of disposal nappies being thrown away and to save money. The UK disposes around 3 billion disposable nappies each year, representing an estimated 2% to 3% of all household waste.

Newspapers

Put newspapers in your recycling bin or take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

You can also chop them and use in your compost or to line pet's litter box.

O

Office furniture

Office furniture can be given away or donate to a charity. Online there are several options in Lewisham.

Oil (cooking or car)

See 'cooking oil' and/or 'car oil'.

P

Paint

You **cannot** dispose of hazardous waste in your normal household waste because it may be dangerous to human health or the environment. [Read more about hazardous waste disposal and recycling.](#)

The City of London provides a hazardous household waste collection service to help you safely dispose of asbestos and boxed chemicals, including paint.

You can arrange a hazardous household waste collection and get more information on the [City of London's website](#). You can also call them on 020 7332 3433.

Paper

You can put paper in your recycling bin. Paper can also be taken to the paper banks at the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Shredded paper can also be recycled but it should be contained in a paper bag or wrapped in newspaper. It can also be added to your compost bin.

Paper towel

You cannot recycle paper towels. You must put them in your rubbish bin. But you can recycle the inner tube.

Perfume bottles

Glass items like bottles and jars are widely recycled. Rinse bottles/jars before putting them in your recycling. Put lids back on (these are removed and recycled during the sorting process).

Pet food pouches

See 'Food pouches'.

Pet waste

Bag pet waste and put it in your rubbish bin.

Phone books

See 'telephone directories'.

Photographs

You cannot put photographs in your recycling bin. You must put them in your rubbish bin.

Pillows

You can put pillows in your rubbish bin if you have space. If not, you can take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Pizza boxes (takeaway)

Put takeaway pizza boxes in your rubbish bin because they are often contaminated with food and grease. If the lid is clean you can cut it off and place it in your recycling bin.

Pizza boxes (from supermarket/frozen)

You can put the cardboard box in your recycling bin. Put the polystyrene disc and plastic wrap in your rubbish bin.

Plastic bags

See 'carrier bags'.

Plastic bottles

You can recycle plastic bottles such as milk and drinks bottles, ketchup and mustard bottles, washing up liquid, bleach, laundry detergent and shampoo bottles. Please wash and squash the bottles and replace the lids (except for pump lids). See 'lids plastic' for more information before recycling.

Plastic milk bottle tops

See 'lids (plastic)'.

Plastic packaging

Please see following sections:

- Plastic pots
 - Tubs and trays
 - Polythene
 - Polystyrene
 - Cling film and shrink wrap.
-

Plastic pots, tubs and trays

You can put clean plastic tubs and pots such as margarine tubs, ice cream tubs, soft cheese and yoghurt pots, chocolate and biscuit tubs and trays in your recycling bin. Also trays or punnets from raw or cooked meat, take-away trays and fruit & veg trays. Please rinse them before recycling. You cannot recycle black plastic food trays.

Most black plastic packaging is coloured using carbon black pigments, which the optical sorting systems in plastics recycling plants cannot pick up. This means anything made out of black plastic usually ends up as residue and is sent to be incinerated instead. It is best not to buy any black plastic products or anything that comes in black plastic packaging.

Plastics (hard)
See 'hard plastic'.

Polystyrene

You cannot recycle polystyrene it needs to go in your rubbish bin or take it to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Polythene (plastic wrapping – LDPE 4)

Polythene plastic wrap such as:

- Bread bags
- Fruit and vegetable bags
- Plastic-wrapped groceries
- Toilet-roll wrap
- Multi-pack shrink-wrap.

These cannot be collected as part of your recycling service, but they can be recycled in the carrier bag collection points at the larger stores of most major supermarkets including Coop, Tesco, Asda, Morrisons, Waitrose and Sainsbury's. Check with your local supermarket or place polythene in your rubbish bin along with cellophane such as confectionary box overwrap, birthday cards overwrap and CD overwrap.

Postcards

You can put postcards in your recycling bin.

Pots (plant)

You cannot recycle plant pots. Put them in your rubbish bin, or give them away, or take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Pots and pans

You cannot put pots and pans in your recycling bin. You can recycle them at our Reuse and Recycling Centre.

If they are in good condition, you can:

- Donate them to a local charity shop
 - Give your pots and pans away on [Freegle](#) or [Freecycle](#)
-

Pringle crisp tubes

You cannot recycle Pringle tubes. Please put these in your rubbish bin.

Pyrex

You cannot recycle Pyrex because it is heat treated glass. If you have broken Pyrex glass, wrap it carefully and put it in your rubbish bin. You can donate Pyrex dishes in good condition to a charity shop or give them away.

R

Rugs

See 'carpets'.

Rubbish (household waste)

You should sort and separate general household waste into items that can be recycled and reused.

Rubble

See 'gravel'.

S**Saucepans**

See 'pots and pans'.

Scrap metal

You cannot recycle metal items in your household bins. You can take your scrap metal to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Sheets (bedding)

You can donate sheets in good condition to local charity shops. You could also cut and reuse them as dusters or cleaning cloths. Some animal rescue charities may accept sheets in good condition. Please check with your local animal rescue centre.

Shoes

You should not place shoes in your household bins. You can donate unwanted shoes to charity, take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre or to a Textile bank across the borough.

Remember to tie the shoes together and bag them. You can also sell shoes in good condition online.

Shredded paper

You can recycle shredded paper but you must put it in a paper bag or wrap it in newspaper first. You can add shredded paper in to your home compost bin.

Shrink wrap

Put multi-pack shrink-wrap in your rubbish bin.

Socks

You can donate socks in good condition to local charities. You can take socks to the Reuse and Recycling Centre or put them in a textile bank across the borough.

[Find a textile bank near you.](#)

Soft foam

Foam items such as fast food boxes and meat trays cannot be recycled. Please put them in your rubbish bin.

Spectacles (reading or sun glasses)

Opticians collect unwanted spectacles for reuse in developing countries.

Squeezable tubes

You cannot recycle squeezable tubes such as toothpaste, make-up, face or hand creams, or food tubes. Please put them in your rubbish bin.

Sticking tape and Sellotape® (on paper or card)

You do not need to remove sticking tape from paper or card before recycling them. It will be removed when the material is pulped.

Stones

See 'gravel'.

Straws

Plastic or paper straws cannot be recycled and should go in your rubbish bin.

If you'd like to reduce your waste, you could avoid using single-use straws or invest in a reusable straw.

T

Table cloths

You can donate table clothes in good condition to local charities or reuse them for outdoor picnics. You can also take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre or a Textile bank.

[Find a textile bank near you.](#)

Visit the [Love Your Clothes website](#) for advice on buying long-lasting clothes, upcycling, and repairing your own clothes.

Takeaway food containers

You can put plastic and aluminium takeaway food containers in your recycling bin.

Please rinse before recycling. You can also reuse plastic containers to store food.

Polystyrene containers must go in your rubbish bin.

Tealight candles

Generally, tealight candles cannot be recycled. This is because it isn't possible to separate the wax and wick from the metal holder. However, it is sometimes possible to separate the wick and wax from the metal or plastic containers. To do this:

- Put the burnt-out candles in your freezer for an hour or so
- Turn the candles upside-down and tap or press firmly on the base
- The wax should crack and come out easily, along with the wick

To avoid waste, however, naked candles which don't come in containers are the best option.

Tea towels

You can donate tea towels in good condition to local charities. You can also take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre or to a textile bank. [Find a textile bank near you.](#)

Visit the [Love Your Clothes website](#) for advice on buying long-lasting clothes, upcycling, and repairing your own clothes.

Telephone directories

You can recycle old telephone directories, please put them in your recycling bin.

Televisions

See 'Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE).

Tetra Pak

See 'cartons'.

Textiles

You cannot put textiles in your recycling bin. You can give unwanted clean clothes and textiles (e.g. curtains, towels or bed covers) to charity shops. Local cat and dog shelters may accept old bedding and towels. You can also take them to the household waste recycling centres or recycling bring sites. Make sure to check which sites accept textiles.

You can also take textiles to our reuse and recycling centre or to a textile bank.

[Find a textile bank near you.](#)

Visit the [Love Your Clothes website](#) for advice on buying long-lasting clothes, upcycling, and repairing your own clothes.

Tins

See 'cans'.

Toaster

If your toaster is working you can:

- Take your toaster to a local charity shop
- Give your toaster away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freecycle](#)

If not, you can take it to a [WEEE bank](#). You can also take it to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Towels

You can donate towels in good condition to local charities. Some animal charities may accept towels. Please check local animal rescue centres.

You can also take towels to our reuse and recycling centre or to a textile bank.

[Find a textile bank near you.](#)

Visit the [Love Your Clothes website](#) for advice on buying long-lasting clothes, upcycling, and repairing your own clothes.

Toys

You cannot recycle toys. You can give toys away to family and friends or donate them to:

- Charity shops
- Doctors' surgeries
- Play groups and hospices.

Broken toys and larger toys made from hard plastic like slide can be recycled at the Reuse and Recycling Centre. Remember to remove and recycle the batteries.

Tupperware

See 'hard plastics'

Tyres

Car tyres are one of the few things you cannot put in our skips at the Recycling Centre. Unfortunately, the UK throws away over 55 million tyres a year, and many of them are illegally dumped instead of being disposed of properly.

Car tyres are not accepted at the Reuse and Recycling Centre. You can dispose of your old tyres by giving them away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freecycle](#). Use a [licenced waste carrier](#), or [visit the City of London's website](#) or call them on 020 7332 3433.

There are also many other alternative options to up-cycle your old tyres, by creating garden features, planters, etc. Please check the internet for ideas.

U

Unaddressed mail

See 'junk mail'.

Underwear

If they're good as new or unworn - Sell them and make some money. Sell them locally at bring and buy sales, jumble sales or car boot sales or online.

If they're in good but worn condition - Charities such as [Against Breast Cancer](#) collect bras and send them to developing countries where they are not readily available.

Donate them to your local charity shop – check before you donate as some charities will only accept underwear that has never been worn.

You can also take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre or to a textile bank.

[Find a textile bank near you.](#)

V

Vending cups

Put vending cups in your rubbish bin.

Video tapes

You cannot recycle video tapes. You can donate working VHS videos to your local charity shop. Put unusable tapes in your rubbish bin or also take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

W

Wallpaper

You cannot recycle wallpaper as it is difficult to pulp and is also often contaminated with paste. If you have new rolls, your local charity shop may take it. Or take them to the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

Washing powder boxes

You can recycle empty washing powder boxes. Squash the boxes flat so there is more space in your bin for recycling.

Washing-up liquid bottles

You can put washing up liquid bottles in your recycling bin. Please wash and squash bottles and replace the lids before recycling.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

Electricals are classified as hazardous waste as they can contain toxic components. You must dispose of them separately from ordinary waste. Electricals include:

- hair dryer
- toaster
- television
- iron
- mobile phones
- kettle
- monitors
- computers
- keyboards
- mouse.

If your appliance is in good condition, you can:

- take it a charity shop
- give your electrical away on [Freecycle](#) or [Freecycle](#)

[Find a WEEE bank near you.](#)

If your computer is working or broken, it can be donated to Lewisham Device Library, run by [Catbytes](#). Catbytes team of volunteers repair the computers so they can be loaned out at the library. You can recycle broken or damaged electrical at the Reuse and Recycling Centre.

You can also take them to Bromley Council's Recycling Centres.

[Find out more about Bromley Council's recycling centres on their website.](#)

We do not offer secure data removal and we do not protect the confidentiality of data. It is your responsibility to make sure your data is removed from old devices.

For further information on recycling small electrical and electronic items visit:

www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/wasterecycle/recycling/recycling-small-electricals-and-mobile-phones

Wigs

Wigs cannot be recycled in your green bin but they can be donated to charities such as Wig Bank, Simply Wigs, Little Princess Trust, Cancer Research UK to help cancer patients and Alopecia sufferers. Or put the wig in your refuse bin.

Wine glasses

See 'drinking glass'.

Wipes

You cannot recycle wipes. Please put them in your rubbish bin. Do not throw wipes down the drain as they are not biodegradable.

Wrapping paper

You can recycle brown wrapping paper and plain wrapping paper (without glitter or foil). You cannot recycle foil and glitter based paper so put this in your rubbish bin.

Y**Yellow pages**

You can put the yellow pages in your recycling bin.

Yoghurt pots

See 'plastic pots, tubs and trays'.
