

**Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.**

## Recycling sorting station

### Learning aims

- Think about and raise awareness of which waste items can be recycled or reused
- Learn new words linked with waste and recycling
- Match and group items based on their properties and material.



### Resources

- Three containers or empty cardboard boxes
- Three labels for the containers:
  - Plastic
  - Paper and cardboard
  - Food cartons.
- A recyclable waste item to attach to the front of each box. For example:
  - A plastic bottle for the plastic container
  - A piece of crumpled paper for the paper and cardboard container
  - A cardboard milk carton for the food cartons container.
- A range of recyclable materials.

### Activity outline

1. Create a recycling sorting station by attaching the label and recycled item to the front of each container
2. Begin by explaining to the children about the process of recycling and why it is important for the environment
3. Show children that sometimes there is a label on an item which tells you whether it can be recycled or not (have an item with the recycled logo on and an item which states it cannot be recycled)
4. Show children the recycling sorting station and explain that everyone at the setting is going to recycle these three types of items instead of putting them all in the bin
5. Using the collection of recyclable items, hold up each item giving children the chance to classify it and then ask one child to place the item into the correct recycling container
6. Once children are confident in using the recycling centre they can start using it independently during the day to recycle items with ongoing adult guidance as and when needed

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7. At the end of each week, count how many items have been recycled to show how much would have previously been in the bin
8. Before transferring the items to an outside recycling bin or recycling centre, explore with children what can be re-used in the setting. For example, plastic bottles for outdoor water play, clean and dry food cartons for construction or model making
9. Keep a tally chart over a period of time of how much you recycle.

### Extending the activity

- Create your own recycling poster and slogan for the setting and communicate with families how much you have re-used and recycled
- Encourage families to recycle by providing them with information on what can be recycled at home and locally. Visit <https://www.recyclenow.com/> to support with this
- Contact your local council and invite them to share more information with children and families about recycling.