

Yellow Bin Info Sheet

What belongs in yellow bins?

So-called light packaging is collected in yellow bins or yellow bags. This includes product packaging made of plastic, metal, composite, and natural materials.

Does paper and glass packaging also belong in yellow bins?

No, paper and glass are collected separately as they are recycled differently.

Does empty packaging have to be rinsed out?

No, even if, for example, yogurt containers are not squeaky clean, you can put this packaging in the yellow bin. The not-perfectly-clean-rule also applies to other packaging. Just make sure that Tetra Paks, plastic cups, etc. do not contain residual food waste. The rule of thumb is: No food waste. So ideally: consume all the contents to avoid residual food waste.

Does the packaging have to display the Green Dot (“Grüner Punkt”)?

No, there is no obligation to label packaging with the Green Dot in Germany. The Green Dot is the trademark of one of the ten “dual systems” that deal with the collection, sorting, and recycling of packaging in Germany. Even if they do not display the Green Dot, cans, Tetra Paks, etc. belong in yellow bags or yellow bins, so that they can be recycled.

Is everything in yellow bins recycled?

Not everything that is properly separated can be automatically recycled. If packaging consists of different materials, they must be separated manually, e.g. lids from yogurt containers or foil from cheese packaging. Packaging should also not be stacked inside one another – please throw them separately into the yellow bin, otherwise the sorting machine cannot separate them.

What happens to the trash?

Sorting plants use state-of-the-art technology – bag openers, drum screens, infrared scanners, and eddy current separators separate and sort the packaging according to material. Plastics are also separated by type of plastic. This is important for recycling, because this is the only way to turn the recyclable materials recovered from the yellow bags or the yellow bins back into new high-quality products. Recycled plastics are then re-manufactured for new packaging, e.g. for cleaning agents or household products, or used in the production of fleece jackets. Or they are re-processed for use as floor coverings or pipes for the horticultural or building trades. Some plastic waste is not of sufficient quality for recycling. This waste is used to generate energy – for example as fuel in cement plants. It replaces fossil fuels such as oil or coal and is thus ecologically valuable.

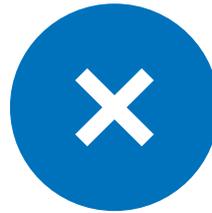


What belongs in the yellow bin?



Only used and emptied packaging (with or without Green Dot / „Grüner Punkt“) that is not made of paper, cardboard, paperboard or glass belongs in the yellow bin. Please separate packaging components from each other. Rinsing is not necessary.

- Service packaging, e.g. Styrofoam menu boxes (such as those used in dining halls), takeaway coffee cups
- Plastic cups, e.g. for yogurt
- Plastic packaging, e.g. for sausage, cheese, ice cream
- Tin cans
- Aluminum foils
- Beverage cartons, e.g. for milk, juice
- Plastic bags, such as shopping bags, pasta bags
- Cosmetics packaging made of plastics
- Styrofoam packaging
- Butter foil/wraps
- Filling material for shipping packages, including bubble wrap
- Soup and sauce bags
- Tubes, e.g. for mustard and toothpaste



Packaging made of paper, cardboard, paperboard and glass as well as all waste that is not packaging does not belong in the yellow bin.

- Heavily soiled packaging, e.g. half-full cans or yogurt containers
- Paper, glass, biowaste
- CDs
- Plastic covers for documents
- Ballpoint pens
- Other plastic parts, e.g. components of devices or facilities, lab equipment
- Packaging with hazardous substances (chemical containers)
- (Rechargeable) batteries
- Light bulbs
- Printer cartridges
- Lighters

An info sheet and this overview are also available for download at: www.rwth-aachen.de/sustainability