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Foolproof Home Recycling

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Efficient home recycling is the cornerstone of grassroots environmental activism. By creating the ultimate domestic recycling system, **you'll show your kids the value of recycling and respecting the environment.** While it will take a little time to set up a foolproof recycling system that works for little ones or bigger children, it's not a very complex job, and it will offer a host of benefits to your family over the long term.

To help you create a practical, low-cost home recycling system that your kids can use, we've compiled some helpful tips and instructions. We know that 33.6% of Americans are interested in home recycling issues, so we've also put together some fascinating facts about American recycling programs, as well as the negative impact of non-recyclable trash on our beautiful planet.^[i]

Quick Guide: Recycling in America

- **1,100+ pounds not recycled by average home:** The average American produces 4.5 pounds of garbage each day, for a yearly total of 1,600 pounds.^[ii] Just over one pound of daily trash per person is recycled.^[iii]

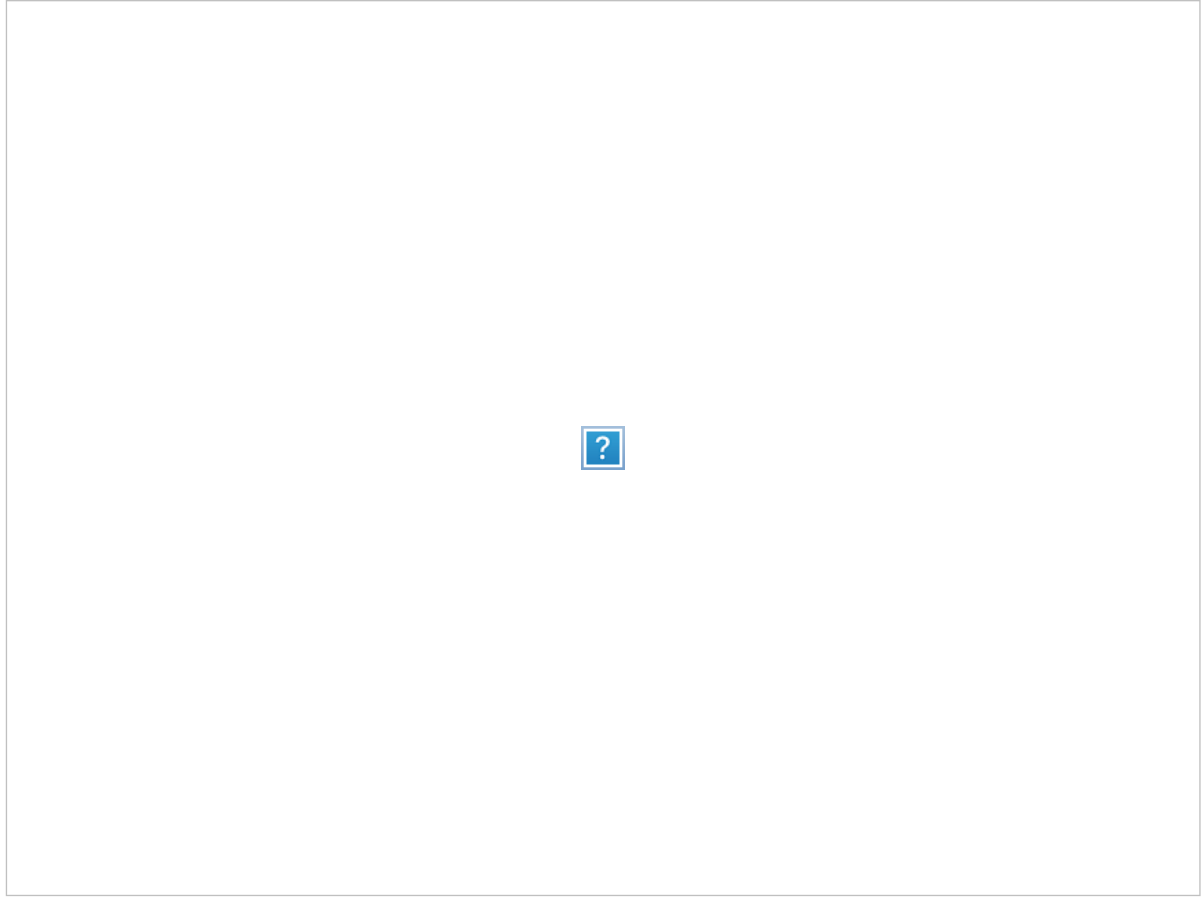
- **98% recycling participation with curbside programs:** There are currently 9,000 curbside recycling programs in the US.^[iv] Access to curbside recycling programs results in a participation rate of 98%.^[v]

- **School recycling models eco-waste habits:** Schools that feature recycling programs help to conserve resources, such as trees. Since Americans use 71 million pounds of paper products yearly, school recycling programs set a proper example for the next generation.^[vi]

Take Action! Establish a Home Recycling System

1. **Find out what can be recycled:** Recycling rules and regulations vary by community, so checking with your local solid waste management program to find out what is (and isn't) ok to recycle in your community is the first step. To access a master list of municipal websites in the USA, visit the official [USA government website](#). To view a great quick guide of what can (or can't) be recycled in most municipalities, check out the handy table posted at [Obviously.com](#).
2. **Get easy to use recycling bins:** The bins you choose should be easy to clean, practical, and sized for your family's particular needs. If you're searching for an affordable way to store recyclables in your own home, consider upcycling bins and bags into home recycling containers. The following are some guides to creating DIY recycling containers: [ApartmentTherapy](#) (a variety of designs), ehov's upcycled [cardboard containers](#), or GardenToday's [wooden recycling container](#) (use scrap wood!).
3. **Label and instruct on recycling bin use:** When it comes to recycling with your kids, it's important to label garbage and recycling bins clearly and then put them in appropriate areas of your home (such as bedroom, bathroom, and garage). To get your children involved, make a game of setting up your new system with the outline provided at the [Green Guide for Kids](#).
4. **Teach proper recyclables cleaning:** Kids also need to learn how to clean recyclables before binning them. To give them some pointers, visit [RecycleMore.ie](#).
5. **Inspiring kids to be involved on recycling day:** As all parents know, motivating children to do household chores can be tough. To help your kids find the motivation to bring recyclables to the curb or recycling center each week, allow them to keep some of the proceeds that you receive from taking cans to recycling centers. You may also want to offer treats or playtime when kids go along with your new recycling plan. The [Kid's Health Guide](#) offers some great tips for [parents who want to inspire their children to recycle household items](#).
6. **Tour a recycling facility:** If you need to travel with your family in order to recycle items, why not make the journey fun and educational by taking your kids on a tour of the recycling plant? Many recycling plant websites in the USA also offer fun resources for kids, such as the Kid's Korner web page found at the [Metropolitan Recycling Plant](#) in New York City.
7. **Basic cleaning for recycling containers:** Plastic recycle bins may be hosed down with hot soapy water and then rinsed once per month (or when they get really dirty); this is a great "earn your allowance" job for children.
8. **Fight for curbside recycling:** To advocate for a curbside recycle programs in your own community, check out the advocate's toolkit posted at [Recycle Now Philadelphia](#).





Dig Deeper: Why Recycling is Vital to the Health of our Planet

- Grasp the fundamentals of recycling at the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) website.
- Learn about the future of recycling at the [Earth911](#) website.
- Watch this video on the [Importance of Recycling](#).
- Check out this cool [Recyclebank program](#) in Florida that rewards residents for everyday green actions including recycling with discounts and deals from local businesses.

Images By [Arlington County](#) and [AGeekMom](#).

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