

Ready, Set, Sort

Effort and Resources

Easy to moderate. Low to no cost.

Objective & Overview

Encourage employees to recycle more by providing an interactive opportunity to learn what can and can't be recycled in your workplace.

In this game, players will sort materials based on what can and can't be recycled in your office. Use it as a simple way to engage staff one-on-one, or make it a full-blown competition to generate enthusiasm about recycling and liven up your staff meeting.

Step 1: Gather and Prepare Materials

Items to Sort

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum soda can | <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry detergent bottle | <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic soda bottle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum foil | <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> Rubber band |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cardboard | <input type="checkbox"/> Office paper | <input type="checkbox"/> Steel food can |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chip bag | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper cup | <input type="checkbox"/> Yogurt container |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal box | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper clip | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drink pouch | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper napkin | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Envelope | <input type="checkbox"/> Pizza box | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frozen dinner box and tray | <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic grocery bag | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glass bottle | <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic dry cleaning bag | |

Other Materials:

- Recycling bin or box
- Trash bin labeled "landfill"
- Table

Note: Before your event, research exactly what can be recycled in your building. Check with your building management or recycling hauler if you have questions.

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Step 2: Set Your Station

Place the recycling and trash bins at either end of a large table. Set the materials in the middle. If you have limited space, you can label one end of the table “landfill” and the other “recycle” to play without the bins.

To make it a competition, divide your staff into two teams and make sure that each one has a pile of items to sort and bins or a designated space on the table labeled “landfill” and “recycle”.

Step 3: Sort

For casual, one-on-one engagement:

As employees walk by the table in your lobby or common area, ask them to either sort your whole set of materials or to pick one and place it in the appropriate bin. You may want to offer a prize to people who can correctly sort 10 (or some other designated number of) materials.

For a competition with two teams:

Give teams a time limit to sort their pile of items correctly. Make it challenging by only giving one minute per 10 items. Check to see which team had the most correctly placed items. You may also designate a referee to tally the score and in the process demonstrate to staff what is recyclable in your office.

Pro Tip:



Be ready with suggestions about where to recycle the items that your office recycling program does not accept. If there is a nearby collection point for items commonly used in your office, this may be a good time to designate a collection box and ask volunteers to transport the items for recycling. Plastic bags and batteries are two examples of items that may not be recyclable in your office program but are likely recyclable at a nearby location. Visit IWantToBeRecycled.org for local recycling information.

Ready, Set, Sort Play List

Instructions: Use this list as an answer sheet if you are not familiar with what exactly can be recycled in your office.

Circle one: R = recycle, L = landfill, O = not recyclable in your local collection program, but recyclable elsewhere

Aluminum soda can	R L O	Magazine	R L O
Aluminum foil	R L O	Office Paper	R L O
Cardboard	R L O	Paper Clip	R L O
Cereal box	R L O	Paper cup	R L O
Chip bag	R L O	Paper napkin	R L O
Cardboard	R L O	Pizza boxes	R L O
Drink pouch	R L O	Plastic dry cleaning bag	R L O
Envelope	R L O	Plastic grocery bag	R L O
Frozen dinner box and tray	R L O	Plastic soda bottle	R L O
Glass bottle	R L O	Rubber band	R L O
Laundry detergent bottle	R L O	Steel food can	R L O
Magazine	R L O	Yogurt container	R L O