

The Gainesville Zero Waste News

Unraveling the Confusion Around Recycling Plastics

Don't worry - it's not just you. Pretty much everyone is a little unsure which plastic items are accepted for recycling and which are not. However, if you can **follow the two rules below**, recycling plastics will be a breeze.

1. **Ignore the recycling symbol on plastic items.** These codes are basically meaningless when it comes to determining the recyclability of an item.
2. **Ask yourself – “Is this plastic item a Bottle, Jug, Jar, or Tub?”** If **Yes**, it is accepted. If **No**, don't put it in with your other recyclables.



Even with the best intentions, individuals unknowingly contaminate the recycling stream by placing unaccepted plastics in with otherwise good recyclables.

Plastic items not accepted for recycling includes: plastic bags, pens, stretch-wrap, cups, tubes, foam, utensils, plastic egg cartons, microwavable trays, plant pots, plastic mailing envelopes, bubble wrap, toys, plastic coat hangers, and clamshell containers (such as deli, berry and salad containers). These plastics are of a lower grade material or are often too difficult to process for recycling.

For a complete list of accepted recyclables, visit gainesvillefl.gov/WhatCanBeRecycled. To search the Zero Waste Wizard for information on where you might be able to recycle other materials, go to gainesvillefl.gov/WasteWizard.

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