



## Household Collection and Recycling Guide:

**Aim of the Guide: To assist households with collecting and recycling PET plastic.**

### Introduction

Making a contribution to a cleaner environment and a better life for all by collecting PET for recycling is easy. Here are some things you can do.

**Most PET plastic products are beverage bottles, but increasingly other types of packaging are also made of PET.**

1. **DON'T** simply throw away anything made of PET with other rubbish or as litter on the street.
2. **DO** Separate your PET plastic from your other waste and put it out separately in a clear bag on garbage collection day.
3. **DO** remove the lid, squash your PET bottle, and then **put the lid back on** before placing it in the recycling bin
4. **DO** remove PVC shrink-wrap label from your bottles.
5. **DO** speak to your collector/recycler upfront about PET punnets/trays. PET trays and punnets are currently not being recycled on a large scale as not all of them are identifiable and many are made of mixed polymers or with additives, thus making recycling difficult.
6. **DO** pick up PET bottles that you see lying around on the street and elsewhere and put them in a recycling container.
7. **DO** look out for the special, clearly marked plastics collection containers at many public places such as shopping centres and use them to deposit your used beverage bottles.
8. **DO** join recycling schemes at your local school or other recycling initiatives in your community.



**Plastic bottles are not trash**

9. **DO** teach your family to be aware of the importance of recycling – especially of recycling PET bottles – and encourage them to talk to their friends about it as well.
10. **DO** take your clear bag of separated PET to your closest collection point or drop-off point if your municipality does not pick it up separately. If the Municipality has a recycling collection scheme in place, then the bag will be collected. If not, a collector recycling it for money may pick it up or if it does end up on a landfill site, then packaging it separately will make it easier for waste pickers to detect if and recycle it. You can also take your clear bag of separated PET to your closest collection or drop-off point.
11. **DO** visit [petco.co.za](http://petco.co.za) or [sst.org.za](http://sst.org.za) to find the closest collection point to drop off your PET for recycling
12. **DO** visit [postwink.co.za](http://postwink.co.za) to find someone to collect your recyclables.

## What is PET plastic?



PET is the short name for **Polyethylene Terephthalate**, the type of plastic labelled with the #1 polymer identification code (in a triangle) on or near the bottom of bottles and containers. It is recognisable as an imprint on containers (transparent, clear and/or tinted or any other solid colour). PET is mainly used for **beverage bottles** for (bottled water, carbonated soft drinks, milk, juice, sports and energy drinks), **bottles** for household, personal care and pharmaceutical products **jars, punnets, tubs and trays** for food items, as well as **sheet and film** for packaging.

In South Africa empty, thrown away PET bottles are collected, then flattened and bundled up into big blocks (baled) and delivered to the recycling plant where they are colour sorted, washed, chopped into smaller particles (granulated), re-washed, and extruded (melted down and then made into long thin strings of plastic). Those strings are then cut into small pieces (pellets), before those are then re-used (as recycled plastics) for making a number of items we enjoy every day including fiber filling for our pillows, sleeping bags and winter coats, carpets in cars, fleece shirts but most importantly as recycled PET containers.

Once recycled, from either pre-consumer (such as factory off-cuts) or post-consumer (household) material sources, it is called rPET or Recycled Polyethylene Terephthalate.

## Why collect and recycle PET Plastics?

PET is technically 100% recyclable. It is lightweight and strong and can be transported efficiently and is superior compared to other packaging options with regard to its environmental footprint linked to energy demand in production and resulting Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions.

When recycled PET can further greatly reduce fuel use, energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. PET recycling creates jobs by providing a source of income and helps to save the planet's virgin resources.



**Plastic bottles are not trash**

The PET that is removed from the waste stream results in less waste going to landfill sites and reduces the amount of natural resources needed to make certain products, thereby reducing the impact on the Earth and environment.

Recycling of PET fits very well into the concept of the Circular Economy, and closed loop thinking which looks at a cradle-to-cradle approach and aims to design waste out of a system by ensuring that waste from one product or process becomes a resource for another. This reduces the need for additional resource use and eliminates waste from the outset.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- 1 recycled plastic bottle saves enough energy to power a 60-watt incandescent light bulb for 3 hours.
- Five 2-liter recycled PET bottles produce enough fibrefill to make a winter jacket.
- The energy saved by recycling one plastic bottle will power a computer for 25minutes.  
Recycling 10 tons of PET plastic saves as much greenhouse gas emissions as removing more than three cars from

### **Who is PETCO and how can we support you?**

PETCO is a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) responsible for managing the PET industry's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in South Africa. Our mission is to grow the collection and recycling of PET bottles after consumer use. We have done this for over 15 years and are funded by a mandatory EPR fees paid by Producers on the PET plastic that they place on the market<sup>1</sup>. We invest all our funds in ensuring and encouraging visible recycling, through:

- Contracting and financing PET recyclers who collect bottles, process them into rPET in preparation for the manufacture of new products
- Consumer education and awareness (including schools and community groups)
- Training and joint venture projects (including those with municipalities)
- Equipment support and sponsorship (for collectors), and
- Providing guidance relating to Design for Circularity (for industry).

PETCO offers educational material such as posters, curriculum-aligned school content (find under [Resources](#)) and PET collection bags for events that detail where you can take your recyclables. You can also apply to hire banners to be returned after any specific collection or recycling school or community event.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on Section 18 Legislation: <https://petco.co.za/section-18-everything-you-need-to-know/>



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## Contact PETCO for further information

<b>Call toll free:</b>	0860 147 738 (0860 1 is PET)
<b>Email:</b>	info@petco.co.za
<b>Twitter</b>	PETCO_SA
<b>Facebook:</b>	PETPlasticRecyclingSA
<b>Instagram:</b>	PETCO_SA
<b>LinkedIn:</b>	PETCO, the South African PET Plastic Recycling Company
<b>YouTube:</b>	PETCO South Africa
<b>Website:</b>	www.petco.co.za

## Useful contacts

Visit [www.petco.co.za](http://www.petco.co.za) for a list of collection points, collectors, drop-off sites and buy-back centres.

You could also contact some other industry bodies for general assistance or information about other material streams. Here are some of them, but you could also visit PETCO's website to download a fact sheet with useful contacts:

- Institute of Waste Management [www.iwmsa.co.za](http://www.iwmsa.co.za)
- National Recycling Forum [www.recycling.co.za](http://www.recycling.co.za)
- Packaging SA [www.packagingsa.co.za](http://www.packagingsa.co.za)
- Recycle Paper ZA [www.recyclepaper.co.za](http://www.recyclepaper.co.za)
- Polyolefin Recycling Company (POLYCO) [www.polyco.co.za](http://www.polyco.co.za)
- Polystyrene Packaging Council (PSPC) [www.polystyrenepackaging.co.za](http://www.polystyrenepackaging.co.za)
- ROSE Foundation [www.rosefoundation.org.za](http://www.rosefoundation.org.za)
- SAVA [www.savinyls.co.za](http://www.savinyls.co.za)
- Tetra Pak [www.tetrapak.com/za](http://www.tetrapak.com/za)
- The Glass Recycling Company [www.glassrecyclingcompany.co.za](http://www.glassrecyclingcompany.co.za)
- Collect-a-Can [www.collectacan.co.za](http://www.collectacan.co.za)



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