



Office RECYCLING PACK





Introduction

Did you know your office can have a big impact on the environment?

It's not just about turning off the lights — there's a lot more going on behind the scenes! Below are a few ways our everyday office life can affect the planet:



Energy & water use

from lighting to kettles and everything in between



Waste

think food scraps, paper, old equipment, and worn-out furniture



Air emissions

like those from heating and cooling systems



Noise pollution

even car parks and maintenance work can add to it



Water pollution

from cleaning products or run-off from car parks

But here's the good news: by following a few simple tips in this guide, you can help cut down on waste, save money, stay compliant with the law, and protect your organisation's reputation.

Work together to make your office a greener, place to be!



Paper

Paper might seem small, but it adds up – fast.

The average office worker uses:



Up to 45 sheets of paper

and over half of that ends up as waste.

That's a lot of unnecessary cost, both financially and environmentally.

Paper is one of the biggest waste streams in most offices, but the good news is:
it's also one of the easiest to reduce.

By following the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle), a well-run office can cut usage down to just 16 sheets per person per day. That's a big win for your budget and the planet.

Why does it matter?

Producing virgin paper (paper made from new trees) has a serious environmental impact:



It can lead to loss of natural habitats and water stress in areas with intensive tree farming.



It uses high amounts of chemicals and energy during manufacturing.



And when paper ends up in landfill or is incinerated, it adds to pollution.

Paper is a natural resource that can be recycled up to five times. Choosing locally produced, recycled paper helps reduce these impacts, supports the recycling industry, and cuts down on unnecessary imports.

Recycled paper = smart choice

Recycled paper today is just as good as virgin paper – same quality, same printability, same look and feel. When buying, aim for paper with the highest percentage of post-consumer waste (ideally 100%). That's paper that's already been used and recycled, not just off-cuts from the production process.

There are also standards and labels that help you identify how eco-friendly your paper is – from its raw materials to how it was made, see the next page for full details.

Recycled Paper

Label/logo raw materials criteria

Label	What it means
	The National Association of Paper Merchants awards the NAPM Recycled Paper Mark to all branded papers and boards containing a minimum 75% genuine paper and board waste, no part of which must contain mill-produced waste.
	Label awarded to paper and board products containing 100% waste paper (minimum 51% post-consumer waste).
	There are two versions of the Mobius Loop – one denotes whether the product can be recycled, the other its recycled content. When using the latter, the percentage of recycled fibre used appears in the centre of the loop. Where the product comprises entirely recycled fibre, there is no figure. These symbols are often used without authority and in a misleading manner. Always check the basis for using these labels with your supplier.
	<p>Elemental chlorine free (ECF), chlorine gas has not been used to bleach the pulp during the pulping process.</p> <p>Totally chlorine free (TCF), no chlorine compounds have been used during the pulping or papermaking process.</p> <p>Chlorine free is often used to mean either of the above; ask for clarification from the paper supplier.</p>
	Specifies maximum limits for discharges to water, emissions to air and energy consumption as well as requiring sustainable forestry management for virgin fibre.
	Awarded to paper mills meeting minimum environmental performance standards.

Smarter Paper Use

Before You Buy Paper, Ask:

- Is it made from recycled materials?
- How much post-consumer waste does it include?
- Was it produced in an eco-friendly way?

Know Your Baseline

Want to get a grip on your office's paper use? Start by calculating how much paper each person uses per year. A ream = 500 sheets. A super-efficient office might only use 7 reams per person annually. Share daily usage stats with your team—it's a great way to raise awareness and spot wasteful habits.

Smarter Paper Use: The Waste Hierarchy

1. Prevention is Best

- Print double-sided by default—cuts usage by up to 50%, you can make this a default setting.
- THINK before you print: Do you really need that draft copy?
- Shrink it down: Print 4 pages per A4 sheet for drafts.
- Centralise printers: Fewer desk printers = less unnecessary printing.
- Track usage: Use personal access codes and maybe even a friendly league table.
- Cut down marketing waste: Keep mailing lists clean and current.
- Go digital: Emails, PDFs, and online tools beat paper.
- Email reminders: Add “Think before you print” to your signature.
- Handle confidential waste smartly: Clear instructions = less costly disposal.
- Use thinner paper: 80gsm is the sweet spot for everyday printing.
- Reuse single-sided sheets: Great for drafts or notepads.

2. Prepare for Reuse

- Reuse envelopes—especially for internal mail.
- Donate scrap paper to local schools or nurseries.
- Shred and reuse paper as packaging filler, or even let staff take it home for pet bedding.



Smarter Waste Management

Managing office waste isn't just about recycling paper. By following the waste hierarchy—prevent, reuse, recycle—you can seriously cut down your environmental impact.

Step 1: Prevention – Stop Waste Before It Starts

- **Buy smart:** Choose products with minimal packaging or ask suppliers to take packaging back.
- **Tame the stationery stash:** Use an ordering system to track and reduce overuse.
- **Ditch the disposables:** Say no to plastic cups, paper plates, and single-serve catering items.
- **Cut food waste:** Confirm headcounts before ordering catering—over-ordering is common.
- **Switch to plumbed-in water coolers:** They're cheaper, greener, and free up space.
- **Dry smarter:** Hand dryers beat paper towels for long-term savings and less landfill. If dryers are too pricey, use dispensers that give out one towel at a time.

Step 2: Reuse – Give Items a Second Life

- **Host a stationery amnesty:** You'll be amazed how much unused stuff is hiding in drawers.
- **Use remanufactured toner cartridges:** Same quality, lower cost, and better for the planet. We also offer cost-effective toner cartridge recycling services.
- **Reuse envelopes and packaging:** Especially for internal mail or shipping.
- **Design reusable marketing materials:** Avoid dates or event-specific details.
- **Refurbish tech and furniture:** Many suppliers offer take-back or resale options, we can also provide upcycling collections of unwanted items for reuse or charity donations.
- **Donate or redistribute:** Charities and community groups often welcome office furniture and equipment.
- **Match needs internally:** Got extra supplies in one department? See if another team can use them.



Did you know?

Around 70% of office waste is recyclable.

By recycling as much as possible, you may be able to reduce your waste disposal costs significantly, particularly as the cost of disposal is increasing due to the Landfill Tax.

Recycling costs less than disposal to landfill, particularly if you segregate your waste. Check what is in your bins.

Tips for Smarter Office Recycling

Want to boost your recycling efforts at work? Whether you're in a busy office or a hybrid setup, these simple steps can help reduce waste, cut costs, and keep things running smoothly.



Keep Contamination in Check

- **Check your bins regularly** to make sure the right materials are going in the right places.
- **Use clear bags** instead of black bin liners—this makes it easier to spot mistakes and keep recycling clean.



Rethink Desk Bins

- Ditch the individual desk bins and switch to shared recycling points—aim for one recycling bin per six staff. Fewer bins = less time spent emptying them, which can help reduce housekeeping costs too.
- Try mixed dry recycling—a great option when space is limited. It allows paper, cardboard, cans, and plastics to be collected together



Appoint a Recycling Champion

- Nominate someone in your team to be your Recycling Champion. They can help monitor bin use, answer questions, and keep recycling top of mind across the office.



Recover Value Where You Can

Even when recycling isn't possible, there are still smart ways to reduce waste:

- **Non-recyclable plastics** might be suitable for energy recovery.
- **Food waste** can be sent to energy-from-waste facilities.
- **Make sure your WEEE** (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) contractor is reputable and recycles components before sending anything to energy recovery.



Make Waste Segregation Simple

To keep your office recycling system running smoothly:

- **Set up central recycling stations** with all the right bins in one place.
- **Colour-code your bins** to keep things consistent and easy to follow.
- **Work with us** to get the right containers and support.
- **Launch a mini awareness campaign** posters, emails, or even a quick team huddle can go a long way - we can help support you with this!
- **Celebrate good habits** with shout-outs or small rewards.
- **Try a friendly league table** between teams/departments to keep things fun and competitive.

Quick Wins for Saving Energy in the Office

Want to cut energy use and keep your office running efficiently? Here are some smart, simple ways to make a difference:



Energy Supply

- **Buy energy centrally** if you can—it's easier to manage and often cheaper.
- **Get quotes yearly** from your current and alternative suppliers.
- **Go green** where possible—look into renewable energy or green tariffs.



Heating & Cooling

- **Know your systems** - use built-in energy-saving features.
- **Lower the heat by just 1°C** - most people won't notice, but you could save up to 10% on heating bills.
- **Set air con to 24°C+** and only use heating/cooling when rooms are in use.
- **Use timers and sensors** and only use heating/cooling when rooms are in use.
- **Keep windows and doors closed** when heating or cooling is on.
- **Upgrade insulation** and consider double glazing during refurbishments.
- **Check boilers and thermostats** - a serviced boiler can save up to 10%.



Lighting

- **Switch to energy-efficient bulbs**
- **Use natural light** - open blinds and keep windows clean.
- **Install sensors** in areas like toilets and meeting rooms to avoid lights being left on.
- **Label switches and use zone controls** so lights are only on where needed.
- **Run a 'switch off' campaign** - stickers, posters, and reminders go a long way.

Communicating Success

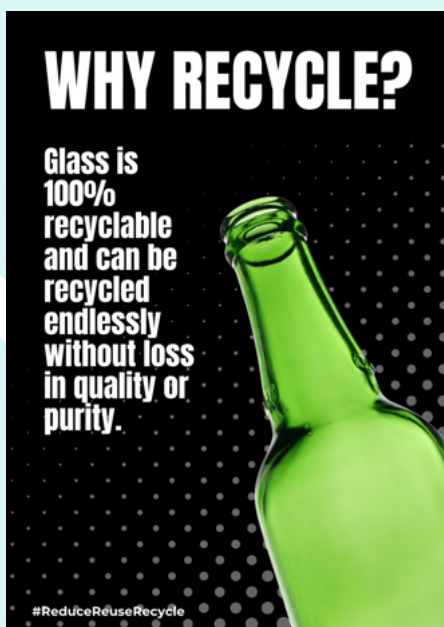
Getting your team on board is key to making your recycling and sustainability efforts stick. Here's how to keep the momentum going and make sure everyone's in the loop:

Keep It Transparent

- Share your goals and progress regularly.
- Celebrate wins—internally and externally—to build momentum and boost your organisation's image.
- Encourage staff to spot inefficiencies and suggest improvements. Recognise and reward great ideas.

Build Awareness

- Ensure everyone knows what's changing and why.
- Label bins clearly and make sure all staff—including cleaners and night teams—understand waste procedures.
- Empower green champions to lead by example.
- Share recycling stats and set targets—celebrate when they're hit.
- Use visuals like graphs and posters to show progress.
- Provide easy ways for staff to get involved (e.g. suggestion boxes).



Make It Stick

Use a mix of channels to keep the message fresh and visible:

- Newsletters & email updates.
- Presentations & awareness days.
- Posters, signage & displays.
- Intranet, website & word of mouth.

Keep it going

- Run themed weeks and competitions.
- Refresh posters and messages regularly.
- Include sustainability in induction training.
- Update procedures to reflect new practices.

Review and Improve

- Use data to track progress are your numbers improving?
- Walk the floor: are lights off, waste sorted, behaviours aligned?
- Ask questions, challenge wasteful habits, and keep collecting ideas.



Get in touch

Let's build a partnership to reach your recycling and sustainability goals

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