

# Compost, Recycling, and Trash Self-Assessment

Offered by Recology San Francisco

Customer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Customer Service Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Instructions

This self-assessment will help you improve the way you see and sort compostables, recyclables, and trash. Please only complete this form when the bins are at least half-full of materials.

1. Start by taking a **photo** of the contents of each bin. Your sample should be a fairly accurate reflection of the contents of each bin as a whole. Make sure that any bags (plastic and compostable) are opened so that their contents are visible in the photos.
2. Then go through the list of materials and check off all materials that are found. The left column is a list of acceptable materials. The right column is a list of unacceptable materials in your bins. These items are considered contamination.
3. Take photos of the items you find, both acceptable and unacceptable.
4. Finish by estimating the percentages of both the acceptable and unacceptable materials in each sample.
5. Once you have completed the self-assessment of all three waste streams, read through the last page to learn some best practices and find resources to ensure proper sorting of your compost, recycling and trash.

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

© 2025 Recology Inc. For use by Recology customers only.

## COMPOST BIN check all that apply

Acceptable Materials	Unacceptable Materials (Contamination)
<input type="checkbox"/> Food (scraps, produce, meat, bones, shellfish, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Glass, E-Waste, Hazardous Waste</b> <b>(Automatic Fail)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Napkins, Paper towels, Tissues (soiled or clean)	Painted or Treated Wood
<input type="checkbox"/> Soiled & Wet Paper (boxes, menus, office paper) & 100% Certified Compostable Paper Cups, <u>clearly labeled</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic Film & Bags (either loose or full)
<input type="checkbox"/> Waxed Cardboard boxes	<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic Utensils, Cups, Dishes
<input type="checkbox"/> Certified Compostable Plastics, <u>clearly labeled</u> To-Go Containers, Utensils, Bowls, Cups, Cutlery	<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic Packaging (of any kind)
<input type="checkbox"/> Certified Compostable Plastic Bags, <u>clearly labeled</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Cans, Trays, Foil
<input type="checkbox"/> Plant or Yard Trimmings	<input type="checkbox"/> Latex Gloves
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Estimate percentage of <b>ACCEPTABLE</b> materials in the overall Compost volume: ____%	Estimate percentage of <b>UNACCEPTABLE</b> materials in the overall Compost volume: ____%
If Unacceptable Materials volume is under 5% <b>and does not include glass, E-waste, or Hazardous Waste: PASS</b>	
If Unacceptable Materials volume is above 5% <b>or includes any glass, E-waste, or Hazardous Waste: FAIL</b>	

***Below are examples of passing and failing samples:***

### Compost PASS:



### Compost FAIL:



Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

© 2025 Recology Inc. For use by Recology customers only.

## RECYCLING BIN check all that apply

Acceptable Materials	Unacceptable Materials (Contamination)
<input type="checkbox"/> Glass Bottles & Jars (from foods only)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>E-Waste or Hazardous Waste (Automatic Fail)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Cans & Trays, Foil (ball up, fist size)	<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Food in Jars, Cans or Containers
<input type="checkbox"/> Paper cups (empty, labeled 'compostable' not ok)	<input type="checkbox"/> Liquid
<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Cans (empty & rinsed)	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper Towels, Napkins, Tissues
<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic Bottles (empty)	<input type="checkbox"/> Wet & Soiled Paper or Cardboard
<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic Cups (empty, labeled compostable not ok)	<input type="checkbox"/> Waxed Cardboard
<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic Containers (empty)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tableware & Glassware
<input type="checkbox"/> Cardboard (clean & dry)	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood
<input type="checkbox"/> Paper (office, junk mail, news, etc., clean & dry)	<input type="checkbox"/> Styrofoam
<input type="checkbox"/> Cartons (from milk & juice, empty)	<input type="checkbox"/> Latex Gloves
<input type="checkbox"/> Aseptic Carton (nonrefrigerated soup, milk, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Loose Liner Bags & Plastic Film, Recyclables in Bags
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Estimate percentage of <b>acceptable</b> materials in the overall Recycling volume: ____%	Estimate percentage of <b>unacceptable</b> materials in the overall Recycling volume: ____%
If Unacceptable Materials volume is under 10% <b>and does not include E-waste or Hazardous Waste: PASS</b> If Unacceptable Materials volume is above 10% <b>or includes E-waste or Hazardous Waste: FAIL</b>	

***Below are examples of passing and failing samples:***

### Recycling PASS:



### Recycling FAIL:



Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

© 2025 Recology Inc. For use by Recology customers only.

## TRASH BIN *check all that apply*

Acceptable Materials	Unacceptable Materials (Contamination)
<input type="checkbox"/> Foam Packaging, Styrofoam	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>E-Waste or Hazardous Waste (Automatic Fail)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Loose Plastic Bags & Plastic Film	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper & Cardboard (clean or soiled)
<input type="checkbox"/> Diapers, Pads, Bed & Pet Pads, Pet Waste	<input type="checkbox"/> Glass (food jars and bottles only)
<input type="checkbox"/> Latex Gloves	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal (cans, trays, foil)
<input type="checkbox"/> Textiles & Pillows	<input type="checkbox"/> Liquids
<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed-Material Items	<input type="checkbox"/> Cartons (any kind)
<input type="checkbox"/> Treated & Painted Wood	<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic bottles, jugs, containers, cups, cutlery
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponges	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper Towels, Napkins, Tissues
<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic Liner Bags (CLEAR ONLY)	<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Food in Jars, Cans & Containers
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Estimate percentage of <b>acceptable</b> materials in the overall Trash volume: ____ %	Estimate percentage of <b>unacceptable</b> materials in the overall Trash volume: ____ %
If Unacceptable Materials volume is under 25% <b>and does not include E-waste or Hazardous Waste: PASS</b> If Unacceptable Materials volume is above 25% <b>or includes E-waste or Hazardous Waste: FAIL</b>	

*Below are examples of passing and failing samples:*

**Trash PASS:**



**Trash FAIL:**



Once you have determined your results, please continue to "Next Steps" on the next page.

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

© 2025 Recology Inc. For use by Recology customers only.



**Congratulations!** You completed the Self-Assessment form! If you passed, we applaud your sorting efforts and success. If you failed, don't worry—we are here to help! The following information and tips can help improve your sorting.

1. Send out reminders to your team or staff of unacceptable items found in your bins, attach a photo and inform them of which bin the item belongs.
2. Use clear plastic bags for the trash, it will make it easy to check for non-trash items.
3. Consider using reusable products like tableware, glassware and food containers
4. Buy supplies and goods in-bulk; this lowers cost and reduces waste.
5. Explore our [website](#) to download and print PDFs of our [posters](#) and to consult WhatBin to find out in which bin an item belongs.
6. Send us a copy of your Self-Assessment at [customerservice@recologysf.com](mailto:customerservice@recologysf.com) or through the [Contact Us](#) form.
7. Meet our multilingual Waste Zero Specialists to schedule complimentary consultations and trainings.
8. Repeat the Self-Assessment to gauge your improvement in sorting materials.
9. If you have **an existing Contamination Charge on your bill** that would like to remove, the first step is to email us a copy of the completed Self-Assessment form showing a *PASSING* percentage (all three bins) along with your request for a 'Charge Removal Inspection'. Once we have your passing Self-Assessment Form, we will inspect your bins to determine whether a charge removal is appropriate.
10. Charge Removal Inspections that *FAIL* will not have the Contamination Charge removed. All bins with contaminated materials will be subject to a contamination charge.

By doing a better job sorting your refuse, you are helping to protect our environment. Items that can be reused, recycled or composted won't be buried and lost forever in a landfill. Instead, contamination-free compost and recycling ensures your discarded, old materials can be processed into something new. Thank you for doing your part helping us protect our precious environment!