

Plastic resin identification code

Quick reference guide

Understanding plastic






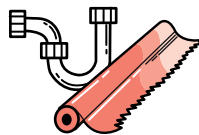








Plastic can be a very practical and unique material, with many important uses in modern society. It is lightweight and can be used to preserve food, improve health, safety and hygiene, and can be reusable or recyclable.

Unfortunately, not all plastic types and products can be easily reused or recycled.

To support New Zealand's move towards a low-carbon, low-waste economy we need to take action

on problem plastics. This includes plastics that cannot be recycled or reused, are designed to be thrown away, or can easily be replaced by more sustainable materials.

The numbering of plastics (resin codes) can also be confusing, especially when similar items are made from different types of plastic, some of which can be recycled, while others can't. A guide to plastic resin identification is below. Details on the plastic types and items proposed for phase-out can be found in the [full consultation document](#).

		COMMON PRODUCTS OF EACH CATEGORY		
EASIER TO RECYCLE	 PET	Polyethylene Terephthalate	water bottles fizzy drink bottles	
	 HDPE	High-density Polyethylene	milk bottles shampoo bottles laundry detergent containers	
DIFFICULT TO RECYCLE	 PVC	Polyvinyl Chloride	vinyl tubing/pipe biscuit trays commercial cling wrap	
POSSIBLE TO RECYCLE	 LDPE	Low-density Polyethylene	soft plastic products bread bags squeeze bottles plastic film	
EASIER TO RECYCLE	 PP	Polypropylene	most temperature resistant containers takeaway containers ice-cream tubs	
DIFFICULT TO RECYCLE	 PS	Polystyrene	yoghurt pots (six-packs) solo cups and CD cases expanded polystyrene cups (eg, styrofoam)	
	 OTHER	All other plastics	toys compostible packaging (eg, Polyactic Acid) sippy cups CDs/DVDs and lenses	

Easier to recycle (commonly collected by council recycling schemes) | Possible to recycle (sometimes recycled) | Difficult to recycle (not often recycled)