








Have you ever wondered what the numbers or recycling symbols mean at the bottom of plastic bottles and containers?

Know Your Numbers

Most household plastic containers and bottles have a recycling symbol containing a number, ranging from 1 to 7. These markings provide information about the chemicals used in the plastic, such as how likely the plastic is to leach and how un-biodegradable the plastic is.

Recycling Symbol and Number Information

SYMBOL							
ACRONYM	PETE / PET	HDPE	V / PVC	LDPE	PP	PS	OTHER / MISC
FULL NAME	Polyethylene Terephthalate	High Density Polyethylene	Vinyl	Low Density Polyethylene	Polypropylene	Polystyrene e.g. Styrofoam™	Plastics not in other categories
ORIGINALLY INTENDED USE OF BOTTLE OR CONTAINER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soda Water Beer Salad dressing Mouthwash Peanut butter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milk Household cleaner Juice Shampoo Cereal (Liners) Detergent Motor oil Yogurt Butter Toiletries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food wraps Plumbing pipes Detergent Shampoo Clear food Cooking oil Medical equipment Piping Windows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squeezable bottles Shopping bags Clothing Carpet Frozen food Bread bags Some food wraps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yogurt Ketchup Syrup Medicine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compact disc cases Egg cartons Meat trays Disposable plates Disposable cups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunglasses iPod cases Computer cases Nylon 3- & 5-gallon water bottles Bullet-proof materials
RECYCLED USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tote bags Furniture Carpet Paneling Fiber Polar fleece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pens Recycling containers Picnic tables Lumber Benches Fencing Detergent bottles And more! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paneling Flooring Speed bumps Decks Roadway gutters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compost bins Paneling Trash can liners Trash cans Floor tiles Shipping envelopes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brooms Auto battery cases Bins Pallets Signal lights Ice scrapers Bicycle racks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Egg cartons Vents Foam packing Insulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic lumber Other custom products

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The bottom line: Plastics are usually recyclable

While Plastics #1 and #2 represent the vast majority of household containers, check with your local department of public works to see which plastics are being recycled in your area, and then join the recycling movement to manage these resources wisely. If you have a choice, choose the product made with easy-to-recycle and safe packaging.



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