

eco tip



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Recycling IQ

Take a Quiz to Help the Planet

As ambitious folks undertake spring cleaning, questions arise about what is and isn't recyclable, as well as how to do the right thing on an ongoing basis. The world can benefit from our efforts: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that every ton of recycled paper saves the energy equivalent of 322 gallons of gasoline, while a ton of aluminum cans saves 21 barrels of oil. Putting the wrong items into a recycle bin demands extra time and effort at local facilities. We can test our knowledge by taking this short true or false quiz. Please note that local standards may vary, so check for specifics.

1. Both paper and plastic bags are recyclable.
2. All paper in the form of phone books, newspapers, magazines, junk mail, office paper and paperboard, is recyclable.
3. Cardboard pizza boxes can be recycled despite absorption of grease and food residue.
4. Aluminum, steel and tin-plated cans can all go in the recycling bin.
5. Some of these items are recyclable: Styrofoam food containers and cups, used paint cans, sewing needles, non-empty aerosol cans, garden hoses and clothing.
6. Recycling broken glass is the same as intact glass.
7. It's easy to recycle a broken or outmoded cell phone or laptop computer.
8. It's vital to recycle office and other paper.

Answers:

1. False; generally, only paper bags are recyclable unless a grocer or big-box retailer has its own program for plastic bags.
2. True
3. False
4. True, if free of harmful chemical residue.
5. False; generally, none are recyclable. Notable exceptions for foam are detailed at FoamFacts.com/recycling; shipping storefronts may accept foam packing peanuts.
6. False; put broken light bulbs and other shattered glass in the trash; bring all fluorescent bulbs to a local building supply store.
7. True; many consumer electronics retailers and manufacturers, states and charities offer options to recycle or donate devices. Visit RecyclingForCharities.com, Call2Recycle.org, Earth911.com or EyclingCentral.com.
8. True; 30 percent of landfill trash generated annually is paper, outweighed only by plastic and food waste.