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The Basics Of Plastic Recycling

The following article lists some simple, informative tips that will help you have a better experience with Recycling.

Derived from the Greek word “plastikos”, which means capable of being shaped or molded, plastic refers to a wide array of synthetic or semi-synthetic solids that are used in producing a wide variety of industrial products and items.

When compared to materials such as metal and glass, plastics generally require a longer recycling process, because plastic has a high molecular weight, and it has larger polymer chains. Heating is generally not enough to dissolve a plastic material's large molecules, as compared to organic molecules. Here are some major facts regarding the recycling of plastic.

Plastics Require A Lot Of Time And Energy To Recycle

Plastic is a truly versatile product. It can either rigid or flexible, opaque or transparent. It can also be made to look like silk, wood or leather. It can be made into plastic toys, containers or even heart valves. There are 10,000 different types of plastics, and the raw materials for plastic are natural gas or petroleum. The process of recycling plastic starts from the time the material is made, to the time it is once again reused as a new product after the recycling process.

Today, most cities and towns have recycling facilities, where residents drop off their recyclable items at collection facilities, and the plastics are sorted, cleaned, as well as reprocessed into new materials. However, unlike materials such as aluminum, which can easily be mixed with other aluminum variants, there are different types of plastic, with each carrying a resin identification code. This means that each plastic resin type has to be separately recycled.

The best time to learn about Recycling is before you're in the thick of things. Wise readers will keep reading to earn some valuable Recycling experience while it's still free.

What Happens Once The Plastic Reaches The Recycling Center?

Once you send your used plastic items to a recycling facility, the workers here inspect the items, and look for contaminants such as glass or rock, or other plastic types which the plant cannot recycle. The plastic is then washed and chopped into flakes, and is sorted in a floatation tank, to determine which plastics sink or float.

The plastic flakes are then dried in a tumble drier, and are melted afterward in a machine called an “extruder”, where heat and pressure melt the material. Because there different types of plastic, each variant at different temperatures. The molten plastic is then forced into a fine screen to separate the contaminants, and the molten plastic is formed into strands.

The strands are then cooled in water, and are chopped in uniform pellets. The recycled plastic pellets can then be made into different products, from carpeting materials to flower pots, lumber substitutes and many more.

While many of us frown on plastic, the sad thing is that we're using more and more of them than ever before. If you're worried about the effects of plastic on the environment, here's how you can personally help. Try reusing plastic products as often as you can, or you may try using other alternatives such as paper or cloth. If you're buying grocery items, buy the product refills instead of the new plastic containers. Best of all, follow the three R's – reduce, reuse and recycle.

Don't limit yourself by refusing to learn the details about Recycling. The more you know, the easier it will be to focus on what's important.

About the Author

By Anders Eriksson, feel free to visit his Perpetual20 training site for great bonuses: [Perpetual20](#)

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