

Making Waste Wonderful

Packaging

A learners guide



Helping schools and communities reduce waste



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mo Te Taiao

Sustainable Management Fund

Packaging Information

Packaging is part of our lifestyle. Imagine life without a glass bottle, aluminium can, cardboard boxes, plastic containers and tins. We rely on packaging to store, move and sell goods.

The West Coast has a great deal of Packaging material, as most goods have to be transported into the region. Packaging accounts for up to 30% of the West Coast waste stream.

Problems with packaging have arisen because most packaging only gets used once before it is thrown away. Packaging has often replaced reusable, refillable containers.

The energy used in packaging manufacture often creates pollutants and carbon dioxide. Not all packaging is necessary and it is often used to sell a product.

Directions: Open up your lunch boxes and list below 3 different types of packaging that you have found in your box. Write a sentence on how you think you could reduce the amount of packaging you brought to school today.

Bonus Class activity: Collect everyone's information and write on a sheet all of the different types of packaging materials the class had and which of these could be recycled.



Packaging you found in your lunch box

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How do you think you could reduce the amount of packaging?

Packaging Information

Why do we need packaging?

1. Makes transporting goods easy and safe.
2. Protects fragile and expensive goods.
3. Keeps food fresh.

What are the problems with packaging?

1. It is only used once.
2. Takes up valuable and expensive space in landfills.
3. It can be dangerous and damage the environment and harm animals.

A product is over packed when:

1. There is a small item in lots of packaging.
2. The packaging costs more than the contents.

It is the manufacturer who makes the product that specifies what type of packaging is used

What can be done?

Make containers lighter with thinner walls so using less materials and resources.

Use more recycled materials in packaging. A few years ago

- Glass bottles weighed 30% more.
- Steel cans weighed 18% more.
- Aluminium cans weighed 29% more.
- Plastic bottles weighed 37% more.

Directions: Think of packaging items like a plastic bottle or steel can and write down three different ways you could reuse that item.

Bonus Activity: Actually do or make one or your ideas. Do some research and see what other ideas people have had.

My ideas for reusing a packaging item are:

1. _____

2. _____



3. _____

Packaging Information

What can you and your family do to reduce packaging?

- Buy in large quantities (bulk).
- Buy products that can be refilled.
- Re-use packaging i.e. plastic bags and bottles for storage.
- Avoid putting small quantities of fruit and vegetables into individual plastic bags.
- Take your own reusable shopping bag.

Directions: Design some different types of packaging for the following: A packet of twelve chocolate biscuits. A Computer game. Try to use the minimum amount of new raw materials. List the types of materials you have used and state whether you can recycle them.

<p>Twelve chocolate biscuits Types of materials used</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Are they recyclable?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 20px;">  </div> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>
<p>A Computer Game Types of materials used</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Are they recyclable?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	

Group Activity

Shopping for less

At home in your cupboard there will be several different examples of packaging.

Divide your class into 5 groups.

Here are some ideas of sections for dividing yourselves into groups.

Group 1: Fruit and Vegetables.

Group 2: Drinks and juice.

Group 3: Dry goods like cereals sugar, flour, soup, tined vegetables etc.

Group 4: Other dry goods like biscuits, convenience foods shampoo soaps etc.

Group 5: Yoghurts, biscuits, chips, etc.

Each group can bring three or more different product items to school for discussion.

Directions:

Each group should fill in the worksheet on the next page.

1. Choose 3 different products within your group of products.
- 2 Record the results on the worksheet.
3. As a class have a discussion about your findings
 - Was the packaging recyclable or reusable?
 - Was there too much packaging?
 - How could the packaging be reduced?

Bonus Activity

If some of the products had too much packaging you could

- write a letter to the manufactures and ask if they could use less packaging or make the packaging recyclable.
- or even send them some ideas for a new design using recyclables materials.

Shopping Survey Work Sheet

Product Name	Type of packaging	Was there too much packaging	Could it be recycled or reused	What does the group think about the packaging
1.				
2.				
3.				

Notes: