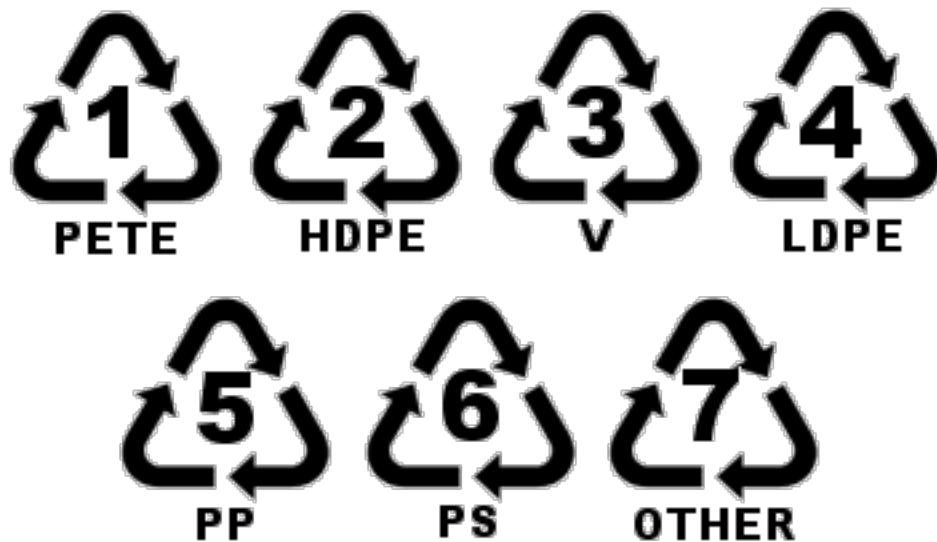


## Which of the following plastics can be recycled and what do the numbers mean?

Use this as a guide and realize that plastic recycling is limited to what recycling facilities are available in your city or town. Many of today's plastics need a specific facility for recycling, thus even if the plastic is technically recyclable it may end up in the landfill. Additionally, it is estimated that only 9% of all plastics are recycled, so the best choice is not to purchase plastics in the first place.



### 1 – PETE – Polyethylene Terephthalate

The easiest of plastics to recycle. Often used for soda bottles, water bottles and many common food packages. Is recycled into bottles and polyester fibers

### 2 – HDPE – High density Polyethylene

Also readily recyclable – Mostly used for packaging detergents, bleach, milk containers, hair care products and motor oil. Is recycled into more bottles or bags.

### 3 – PVC – Polyvinyl Chloride

This stuff is everywhere – pipes, toys, furniture, packaging – you name it. Difficult to recycle and **PVC is a major environmental and health threat.**

### 4 – LDPE Low-density Polyethylene

Used for many different kinds of wrapping, grocery bags and sandwich bags and can be recycled into more of the same.

### 5 – PP – Polypropylene

Clothing, bottles, tubs and ropes. Can be recycled into fibers.

### 6 – PS – Polystyrene








Cups, foam food trays, packing peanuts. Polystyrene (also known as styrofoam) is a real problem as it's bulky yet very lightweight and that makes it difficult to recycle. For example, a carload of expanded polystyrene would weigh next to nothing so there's not a lot of materials to reclaim, particularly when you take into account the transport getting it to the point of recycling. It can however be reused. Learn more about recycling polystyrene.

### 7 – Other

Could be a mixture of any and all of the above or plastics not readily recyclable such as polyurethane. **Avoid it if you can – recyclers generally speaking don't want it.**

**CREDIT:** [www.greenlivingtips.com](http://www.greenlivingtips.com)

## Plastic Recycling Cheat Sheet – courtesy of GreenLivingTips.com

Resin Number	Abbreviation and full name	Place in recycle bin?	Some common applications	Other recycling actions
	PETE Polyethylene Terephthalate	YES / NO	soda bottles, water bottles , food packaging	
	HDPE High density Polyethylene	YES / NO	Detergents, bleach, milk, motor oil bottles	
	PVC Polyvinyl Chloride	YES / NO	Plastic piping, toys, furnishings	
	LDPE Low-density Polyethylene	YES / NO	Plastic wrap, grocery bags sandwich bags	
	PP Polypropylene	YES / NO	Clothing, bottles, tubs, rope	
	PS Polystyrene (Styrofoam)	YES / NO	Cups, foam food trays, packing peanuts	
	Other	YES / NO	Various applications.	
For more information on recycling and earth friendly living, visit <a href="http://www.greenlivingtips.com">www.greenlivingtips.com</a>				

This cheat sheet can be used in your home or place of business to provide an at-a-glance summary of various plastics, where they are commonly used and if they can be placed in your recycle bin.

Generally speaking, plastics using resin numbers 1 and 2 can be placed in your kerbside bin, however different authorities have varying rules about the other resin numbers; so you should contact your local recycling/waste management authority for guidelines before marking the "yes" or "no" options next to the other resin codes.

For plastics not able to be placed in your recycling bin, you can add information in the "other actions" section to detail alternative arrangements you may have made for recycling these items or instructions for disposal.

For maximum visibility and convenience, cut out the cheat sheet above and place it close to where your garbage or recycling bins are, on the bin itself or in places such as staff kitchen areas. If you have no way of recycling plastics that you can't place in your recycling bin, you may just wish to cut out the first 3 columns.

I hope you find this cheat sheet of value; please feel free to send or print out a copy for your friends, colleagues and family and don't forget, GreenLivingTips.com has hundreds of articles packed with useful tips to help you green your home and business!

Good luck in your recycling efforts,

*Michael B.*

Michael Bloch  
Green Living Tips  
<http://www.greenlivingtips.com>

# RESIN IDENTIFICATION CODES



**POLYETHYLENE TEREPHTHALATE (PET)**  
BEVERAGE BOTTLES, CUPS, OTHER PACKAGING



**HIGH-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE (HDPE)**  
BOTTLES, CUPS, MILK JUGS



**POLYVINYL CHLORIDE (PVC)**  
PIPES, SIDING, FLOORING



**LOW-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE (LDPE)**  
PLASTIC BAGS, SIX-PACK RINGS, TUBING



**POLYPROPYLENE (PP)**  
AUTO PARTS, INDUSTRIAL FIBRES, FOOD CONTAINERS



**POLYSTYRENE (PS)**  
PLASTIC UTENSILS, STYROFOAM, CAFETERIA TRAYS, ETC.



**OTHER PLASTICS**  
ACRYLIC, NYLON, POLYCARBONATE AND POLYLACTIC ACID (PLA)



Graphic: National Geographic