

Green canteen



What is a green canteen?

A green canteen is a school canteen that aims to make sustainable changes and reduce its ecological footprint. Green canteens choose to avoid and recover waste, in particular single-use plastic.

Single-use plastic is designed to be discarded after one use and has a big impact on our environment. It includes items such as straws, cups, water bottles, plastic bags and packaging. For more information see the [Single-use plastic fact sheet](#).

Canteens that go green can save money, as well as the environment. A reusable container, for example, pays off its packaging costs after around 5 uses, so investing in some can save money in the long-run.

Schools with green canteens

easily make landfill the last resort by:

- ✓ avoiding packaging by purchasing items in bulk, such as drinks (e.g. juice) and cleaning products
- ✓ using produce from the school garden instead of buying herbs, fruit and vegetables
- ✓ avoiding pre-packaged items by making your own, such as icy poles, chips and slices
- ✓ using [waste wise recipes](#)
- ✓ banning non-recyclable items such as plastic straws, bags and cutlery
- ✓ choosing reusable items instead of disposable items, such as cups, drink containers, lunch bags, sandwich wraps, lunch boxes and cutlery
- ✓ collecting canteen items such as bottle tops, boxes, and jars for reuse in school activities
- ✓ setting up bins in the canteen to collect recycling and food organics
- ✓ collecting soft plastics and taking them to the nearest supermarket for recycling
- ✓ collecting fruit and veg scraps for the school compost or worm farm, or to feed the chickens
- ✓ using a waste-free canteen lunch order system
- ✓ buying recycled products or products with recycled content.

For more information about the Waste Wise Schools Program visit www.wastewise.wa.gov.au





Swap this

- ✗ Cling wrap and snap lock bags
- ✗ Paper lunch bags
- ✗ Plastic bottles
- ✗ Juice boxes
- ✗ Hot drink/coffee cups

for that

- ✓ reusable containers or sandwich wraps
- ✓ reusable lunch bags
- ✓ reusable bottles
- ✓ reusable drink bottles filled from bulk juice bottle
- ✓ reusable cups



Key tips to success

Schools that have been successful in greening their canteen share the following advice:

- engage different representatives within the school community to plan and implement changes
- devise a good system for collecting and washing reusable items
- educate students and the whole school community about new canteen procedures, the problem with waste and the benefits of change
- label all reusable items to ensure their return
- find suitable suppliers for purchasing bulk items and recycled products
- have students help to drive the change
- start small with something that has a high impact (e.g. no straws) and gradually build on your success
- set targets for reducing canteen waste
- measure your changes through regular waste audits or visual bin audits
- celebrate your success with the whole school community.

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Remember

Recycle only these five through co-mingled recycling: **paper, cardboard, cans, glass bottles and containers, plastic bottles and containers**. Please note that plastic straws, cutlery, paper towels and juice boxes cannot go in co-mingled recycling.

Great green canteens choose to use **reusable containers and cutlery**.

Compostable containers and cutlery are still single-use items. They use valuable resources and energy, and only break down in certain conditions, so cannot go into home or school compost.

Degradable and eco/biodegradable containers just break down into smaller pieces of plastic over time.

Green canteen projects are eligible for **funding** through **Waste Wise Schools grants**. Items such as reusable containers, reusable cups, reusable canteen lunch bags and materials for students to create their own reusable sandwich wraps will be considered, **where a school can clearly demonstrate how this will reduce waste to landfill** in the canteen.



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