



SciGirls



Discover the fun of science with your entire family!

Going Green

Most people don't think about what happens to the trash they throw away. Unfortunately, garbage doesn't just disappear once it goes into a garbage can. This activity will help your children understand where the trash goes and make better decisions to **reduce, reuse and recycle!**

Here's How:

1. Your challenge is to conduct a waste audit with your kids and use your findings to make a plan for reducing the amount of trash in your home. Before you begin, get a copy of the local recycling guidelines so you know what should and should not be in the trash.



Do not include bathroom waste. Wear close-toed shoes, gloves and eye protection while sorting. Garbage should only be handled when spread out on a tarp to avoid unknown contact with sharp objects.

2. Gather one day's worth of trash from your home and empty it onto a tarp. Begin sorting (or classifying) items into piles (cardboard, food waste, plastics, etc.).

Fun Fact!

Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours, and the energy saved from recycling one glass bottle could light a compact fluorescent bulb for 20 hours. And the best part? Aluminum and glass can be recycled over and over again!



You'll Need:

- ◆ garbage
- ◆ plastic or rubber gloves
- ◆ a large plastic tarp (or equivalent)
- ◆ an area to dump the waste (ideally, outside)
- ◆ paper and pencil

3. Visually eye the volume of each type of trash. If the total amount collected is 100%, you can guesstimate the percent of each type of waste. Graph it to see which type of waste makes up most of the trash.



4. Clean up! Return non-recyclables to garbage cans, sort recyclables into recycling bins, and compost perishables, if possible. Don't forget to wash your hands!
5. Did you find any items that could have been recycled, composted, or simply reused instead of thrown away? Brainstorm ideas to reduce the amount of waste in your home: make a poster of what can and cannot be recycled and hang it up in your kitchen; choose products with the least amount of packaging; start a compost bin; or opt for reusable containers to pack your lunch. Be creative!



Watch videos online at pbskidsgo.org/scigirls.