

Sort it out with waste stations

Join the many schools across Western Australia (WA) making landfill the last resort by correctly sorting waste at school with waste stations!

A waste station consists of several bins positioned together for disposal of different waste types.

Waste stations have proven to be the most effective way of encouraging people to separate their waste at the source. Good placement of bins, consistent colours, clear signage, and education are some of the ways you can encourage your school community to sort waste correctly.

For more information about the WasteSorted Schools program visit www.wastesortedschools.wa.gov.au

Setting up waste stations

Consider your waste streams

Assessing the types and quantity of waste generated at your school will help determine which bins to include in your waste stations. A WasteSorted Schools [waste audit](#) can help you do this.

Some common waste separation streams at school are:

- general waste (landfill)
- organics
- Containers for Change
- paper and/or cardboard
- co-mingled recycling.



Before selecting an additional waste stream, ensure there is a reliable method of disposal in place. Some waste streams can be managed on site at school, such as organics, while others rely on the use of a service provider. State Government schools in the Perth metropolitan area must arrange waste services through the [Recycling and Waste Redirection CUARWD2025](#). Non-government and regional schools may select any service available.

We strongly recommend avoiding commingled recycling bins in student eating areas as they are highly likely to become contaminated with food waste. Students should be encouraged to bring recyclable lunchbox waste home (eg. yoghurt tubs, tuna cans), rinse them, and then place in their household recycling bin.

Some suggestions for waste station configurations in different areas are:

Classrooms

- General waste, paper, organics

Staffroom

- General waste, organics, Containers for Change, co-mingled recycling

Canteen

- General waste, organics, Containers for Change, co-mingled recycling

Eating areas

- General waste, organics, Containers for Change





Select your bins

Waste stations work best when consistent colours and signage are used for each waste stream. WasteSorted Schools recommend using the Australian standard bin colours to ensure consistency between bin use at school, home and in the wider community. This does not mean replacing all bins. It could involve replacing just the bin lids or simply ensuring signage is printed in the correct colours.

The Australian standard bin colours are:

- General waste (landfill) – **red**
- Paper and/or cardboard recycling – **blue**
- FO (food organics), GO (garden organics), FOGO (food and garden organics) – **lime green**
- Co-mingled recycling – **yellow**
- Containers for Change – no Australian standard colour, however, it is important that the colour you choose is not red, blue, yellow or lime green. You may like to use the Containers for Change brand colour for consistency with community.



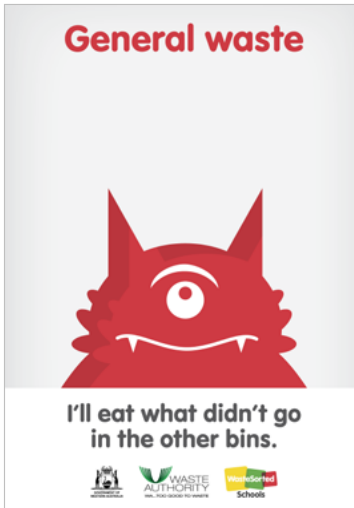
Bin sizes

Although many bins are sold in sets, you will not need the same size bin for all waste streams in all areas. Consider who will empty the bins and how often to determine the size required. For example, organics bins should be emptied and rinsed daily to avoid unwanted smells and pests, while paper recycling bins may only need emptying once a week. Students who are responsible for collecting and emptying organics and recycling bins may find bins with a capacity over 30L difficult to lift and carry when full.

Suggested approximate bin sizes

Waste stream	Primary school student facing areas		High school student facing areas		Staff areas		Kitchens
	Classrooms	Outside areas	Classrooms	Outside areas	Staffroom	Office spaces (including next to photocopiers)	Canteen / food technology rooms
Organic waste (Emptied daily)	7L compost caddy	23L compost caddy		23L compost caddy	7L compost caddy		7L compost caddy (include caddies on student benches)
Paper recycling (Emptied weekly)	30L bin		30L bin			30L bin	
Containers for Change (Emptied weekly or fortnightly)		30L bin (or collection basket attached to general waste bin)	30L bin (if there are drinks being consumed in classes)	60-120L wheelie bin (or collection basket attached to general waste bin)	30L bin or 60-120L wheelie bin	30L bin	30L bin or 60-120L wheelie bin
Commingled recycling (Emptied weekly)					30-60L bin		30-60L bin
General waste (Emptied daily)	30L bin	60L bin or 60-120L wheelie bin	30L bin	60L bin or 60-120L wheelie bin	30-60L bin	30L bin	60L bin or 60-120L wheelie bin

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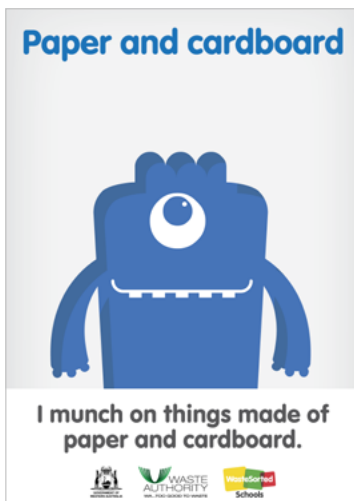


Label your bins

Clear, easy-to-read and consistent signage is one of the key factors for success when setting up your waste stations. Ensure all bins are labelled, even those that have been in use for a long time.



WasteSorted Schools [signs](#) are easy to download and can be used to label the different waste streams you have available for student and staff use.

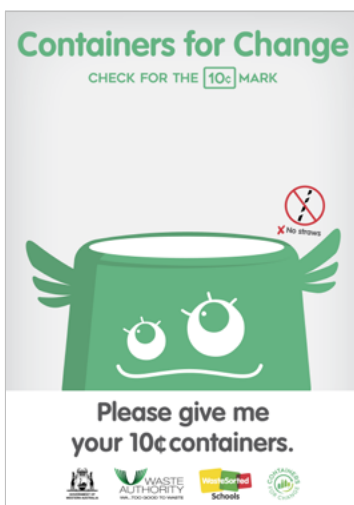


Using the WasteSorted Schools bin signs

WasteSorted Schools bin signs are available to help communicate messages on the importance of sorting waste correctly and putting waste items in the right bin to reduce contamination.

There is a selection of premade bin signs available to download, depending on the waste streams that are currently in place at your school. To ensure you download the correct signage, please select the files that suit the waste systems at your school.

WasteSorted Schools also have a set of blank bin signage templates that have been designed to allow schools to create their own bin signage depending on individual needs. All bin signs and detailed information on how they can be used can be found on the [WasteSorted Schools website](#).



When printing your bin signage, consider the size of your bins and where they are located. For example, an A3 sign will fit well on a 120 litre bin but may be too large for a 60 litre bin. Smaller bins, such as compost caddies, often require signage reduced to A5 or A6, depending on the size and shape of the caddy.

If your bins are located outdoors, you may also wish to choose UV resistant or weatherproof materials to ensure signs are not damaged over time. These options can be discussed with your chosen printer to help select the most suitable size and material for your needs.

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Choose your location

To make waste separation as easy as possible, place your waste stations in high-use areas, such as classrooms, student eating areas, canteens and staff rooms. Where possible, waste stations should replace all other bins in that area. To help determine the most suitable placement of your waste stations, consider using the WasteSorted Schools [Visual Bin Audit Toolkit](#) for most frequently used bins.

Placing bins together rather than on their own increases the likelihood of correct waste separation as students tend to use whichever bin is closest, often without checking.

Educate your school community

Before introducing your new waste stations, it is important to educate staff and students about correct bin use. Explicitly teach which items go in which bin and address the most common contaminates, for example tissues DO NOT go in the paper bin. Modelling this at a whole school event, such as an assembly or sports carnival, is a great way to ensure the message is consistent. Revisit the topic at regular intervals, such as the start of each new year or when changes are made to the current system, to keep the information current and present in peoples' minds. Student green teams love to help deliver the message!

Studies have shown that having bin monitors decreases bin contamination. Consider using your green team or a group of student volunteers to monitor the bins, especially during the first couple of weeks. They could offer positive reinforcements for students making the right choice, such as high fives, house points or raffle tickets, and educate those students who are unsure where their rubbish should go.



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