

Guidelines to a Waste-Free Lunch

Reduce waste, Save money



Reduce *Avoid using disposables or throwaways*

Use a lunch box, small cooler, or fabric bag. If you use paper or plastic bags, reuse or recycle them when possible. When shopping, buy in bulk, and then create your own individual servings of foods like carrot sticks, cookies, and pretzels by packing them in reusable containers.

Reuse *Invest in durable reusable containers or reuse containers*

Don't throw away things like margarine tubs and yogurt containers when they are empty, just clean and reuse them. A plastic food bag can be reused several times, just turn it inside out, wipe with a soapy cloth, rinse, and leave to dry.

Recycle *Use recycling bins at home, work, and school*

Packaging that is accepted in a single-stream Recycling Program includes:

- Plastic bottles and jugs (lids are OK if left on empty bottle or jug).
- Steel and aluminum cans.
- Glass bottles and jars.
- Milk/juice cartons and juice boxes (remove caps or straws), clean paper, brown paper bags, paperboard boxes, and cardboard.

Pour off extra liquids and remove any waste before recycling. Plastic bags are not recyclable at school or in curbside bins/carts, but they can be recycled at certain grocery stores.

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Save Leftovers *Don't throw away good food*

Bring home leftovers when possible. Leftovers can be used as a snack or for lunch the next day. Bringing home leftovers allows for the lunch packer to see what is not being eaten and modify what is packed in future lunches. This practice also helps create better eating habits and saves money.

Compost *Put food garbage to work for the environment*

Leftover food does not have to be garbage. When possible, place leftover vegetables, fruit, bread, and pasta in the appropriate compost container. Then use the compost in your garden as a healthy nutrient for your plants. (Dairy products, oily foods, and meat should not be composted.)

Buy Recycled Content *Buy recycled content items*

Buying recycled helps "close the recycling loop" by putting materials we collect through recycling programs back to good use as products in the marketplace.

Interested in learning more?

Visit our website at HamiltonCountyRecycles.org to learn how to manage yard trimmings, kitchen scraps, old computers and TVs, latex paint, and household hazardous waste.



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