

## **Waste Reduction Lesson**

Here you will learn how to reduce waste & why it's important.

Why reduce waste? Using less, reusing, & recycling save expensive landfill space, natural resources (like trees or water) & energy. The environment thanks you!

Reduce means to use less stuff. When you use less stuff, you make less trash. For example, make a grocery list before shopping. With a list, you are less likely to buy things you don't need & might waste.

Reuse means to use something again & again. What are some ways to reuse?

Use a reusable water bottle everyday instead of a disposable (use once & throw out) plastic bottle.

Wear a cloth face mask instead of a disposable one.

Use cloth towels instead of paper towels.

Reusable items are durable & made to be used many times over. For example, a cloth towel can be cleaned in a washing machine, or a metal straw can be cleaned in the sink & used again.

Using an item again & again does not make any waste that you need to throw away or recycle. Single-use items, such as paper towels or plastic straws, are usually used once & thrown out.

Over time, using reusable items again & again can make a big difference in reducing your waste.

Sharing and borrowing are easy ways to reduce waste. When you check a book out from a library, you are borrowing a book that you will return to the library for others to read.

If you have stuff you don't want anymore, donate it! Donate your things to a secondhand store that sells gently-used furniture, clothing, books, & more.

Upcycling means to give an item a new use or purpose, such as turning scrap fabric into a rag rug. Upcycling is about getting creative to reduce waste.

Upcycling is...turning a plastic bottle (& a few old pencils) into a bird feeder!

Upcycling is...turning a metal can into a pencil holder!

Repairing means to fix stuff that we already have so we can keep using it instead of buying something new. For example, sewing or mending a hole in a sweater, or replacing a flat bike tire.

Recycling is when materials like a metal can, plastic bottle, glass jar, newspaper, or cardboard box, are sent to recycling plants that can make new stuff from these already used materials.

While recycling keeps stuff out of the landfill, it still takes energy & resources to recycle materials. That is why reusing, upcycling, sharing, & repairing are so important!

Want to learn more?

Reduce & Reuse: [www.icgov.org/reduce](http://www.icgov.org/reduce)

Repair: [www.icgov.org/repair](http://www.icgov.org/repair)