

A few simple hacks when grocery shopping that help the planet

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We all want to live a 'greener,' more sustainable life and leave as small a footprint on this planet as possible. Thankfully, in this day and age it is entirely possible to do so, which is good news because one of the threats facing South Africa is that we are running out of landfill space. This means every South African needs to be conscious of doing their bit to make a difference.



The drive to do things 'greener' is made easier through companies like Remade Recycling that collect recyclable materials right from your doorstep in your estate, sort it and send it off to the Mpact mills for recycling into new paper for the packaging industry. The other grades like plastic and glass are sold onto other converters to be made into new products or packaging. The 2019 Plastics SA Recycling Report noted that South Africa currently recovers a massive 519,370 tonnes of plastic items each year with 46,3% being recycled into new products or exported. RecyclepaperZA reports that during 2020 South Africa recycled 1,1 million tonnes of paper and paper packaging putting the country's latest paper recovery rate at 73%, up from 68.5% in 2019. So all in all, South Africa is doing its part to reduce waste to landfill in South Africa but we certainly could all do more. Shopping with these considerations in mind helps us reconsider our waste and recycle more responsibly, which, in turn, helps our planet to heal. To make your efforts easier we have outlined a few tips to help you shop more mindfully:

1. **Know the difference between recycled and recyclable:** Just because the packaging states that it is recyclable, it doesn't mean that it is recycled in South Africa or in your area. Many forms of packaging can be made up of recyclable material like the box that gets delivered to your home with your latest online purchase. However, some packaging may not be recycled at all. Rather check these commonly bought household items with your Remade branch or visit our website [here](#).
2. **Separate correctly:** While Remade separates recyclable materials collected from the residential estates at our facilities in Pretoria and Tulisa Park, it's important to note that usually recyclable material should be separated into the different grades. It should also be rinsed, clean and dry. Remember that food that is likely to contaminate the packaging should (where possible) be cleaned off the packaging. Keep your paper, plastic and cans separate from your glass or follow the instructions as per the flyer you received about the estate programme with your starter kit or ask us if you're uncertain.
3. **Dealing with liquid packaging:** This includes most food and beverage boxes with the plastic foil lining inside, like juice, milk and custard boxes, and is a great choice because it's recycled in South Africa. Even takeaway coffee

cups are recycled, so don't throw these away until you get home and can dispose of them correctly with your other liquid packaging.

4. **Flatten your boxes:** Typically this includes brown moving boxes, smaller online delivery boxes as well as bigger products bought in store, like TVs and appliances. Big or small, these boxes are recyclable and even sought after, so please do flatten them and put them in your recycling bags or stack them next to your bags if they're too big.
5. **Check the paper:** Paper packaging is everywhere in your shopping trolley, from cereal and tea bag boxes to the one holding your spaghetti. A lot of paper packaging is recycled, but only if the paper isn't laminated with a shiny plastic film over it. Lamination is very necessary to protect the food, but it is more difficult to recycle and although solutions may be available in other countries, they are yet to be made available in South Africa.
6. **Avoid single servings:** This packaging is often very small and lightweight; and very difficult to sort and bale for recycling. It also flies around in the wind, creating litter. Some of these items, like plastic bread tags, can be collected into a tub and put into your recycling when full. For the most part it's best to avoid individually packaged sugar, rusks, muffins and straws, etc.
7. **Glass is great:** Glass is recycled right here in SA and can be endlessly recycled with no loss of quality. Another positive is that food and drinks can last longer in glass.
8. **Ready-made meals:** Convenience meals are welcome timesavers in a busy life, however packaging like this is not currently recycled in SA. But this may change. In the meantime, rather repurpose or upcycle these containers. What can be recycled is the cardboard sleeve so make sure to put this in with the paper.
9. **When items can't be recycled**

There are some items that we simply cannot recycle in South Africa. That doesn't mean that all hope is lost, however, it does mean that these products are inevitably landfill bound. Technology is always changing and packaging that is not recyclable today may very well be recyclable tomorrow.

Once each of us does a little more each time we shop to curb our non-recyclable waste and deal with our recyclable waste responsibly, we can significantly impact the rate at which our landfills are filling up and give the natural world its best shot at continuing to be our home for generations to come. If you would like to review more tips and information on how we can all play our part, please visit the Remade blog [here](#).

About Remade Recycling

At Remade Recycling, we separate and remove waste at source for businesses across South Africa. With our conveniently located [branch](#) network we are able to collect, sort and bale recyclable material. We work with all companies, regardless of size and industry sector, offering customisable and sustainable waste management solutions to suit your business and industry requirements. We accept all recyclable waste – which is sorted and baled and the recyclable material on-sold to recycling manufacturing companies including Mpact Paper. Get a [free waste management audit](#) today! An accredited member of the Institute of Waste Management and part of the Mpact Group.

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Mpact is the largest paper and plastics packaging and recycling business in Southern Africa. Our integrated business model is uniquely focused on closing the loop in plastic and paper packaging through recycling and beneficiation of recyclables.

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