

Top tips for waste and recycling

Reduce what you use

- Buy larger quantities and share out
- Buy loose fruit and vegetables
- Consider shopping plastic-free

Make a plan

- Agree who is responsible for waste and recycling each term

Get to know your area

- Check your local council website for the process in your area

Know your dates

- Find out what should be put in each container and when

Recycle well

- Cleaning, sorting and separating waste is essential to avoid contamination

Avoid wish-cycling

- Only put things in the recycling bin that you know can be recycled

Separate your waste and recycling

- Put everything into the right bin or bag – you might need space for several bins

Label your bins

- Use pictures to remind everyone what each bin is for

Waste collection points

- Visit a recycling centre, take to a supermarket or kerbside collection

Have a target

- How many black bags can you get down to every week?

What to avoid

Laminates

Laminated sheets can't be recycled

Glitter

Anything with glitter on can't be recycled because it's a micro-plastic

Disposable wipes

Try washable cloths instead. Tissues aren't recyclable either, so limit use if possible.

Disposable nappies

Could you switch to reusable nappies? Visit the **Love Essex** website to find out how you could get money back on cloth nappies.



Top tips to help the environment

Create a garden and let part of it grow wild

- This increases biodiversity, helps wildlife and to balance the ecosystem
- It also helps children understand we share our space with nature

Grow your own fruit and vegetables

- Some foods like lettuce can be grown indoors on a windowsill
- Growing your own and keeping chickens for eggs is fun, and can significantly cut your dietary carbon footprint

Composting

- Turn food waste into soil improver that you can use across your garden
- Compost provides a thriving ecosystem for insects and bugs that sucks up carbon from the atmosphere

Create a gardening club

- This helps with establishing rules for children, and time gets dedicated to garden maintenance each week
- Encourage parents and carers to visit the garden

Water butts

- A great way to collect water that can be used to water gardens

Reduce your flood risk

- Effective land use, planting trees through green solutions such as the Essex Forest Initiative



Do you have land to plant trees on or would you like to volunteer?
Please contact environment@essex.gov.uk with 'Essex Forest Initiative'
in the subject bar.

Top tips for paper recycling

Pledge to reduce how much paper you use

- Becoming paper-free is a great way to reduce your paper waste

Limit printing and use digital solutions like e-receipts

- Saves money, and a digital copy is less likely to get lost

Reduce the use of paper towels and tissues

- Install a hand-dryer or reusable, washable towels instead
- Use different coloured or personalised cloth towels for each child

Contaminated paper

- Put paper contaminated with food waste in your compost bin

Staples

- Remove staples and other non-paper items from paper waste

Know what can and can't be recycled (Recycle Now)

Can be recycled

- ☒ **Clean paper**
- ☒ **Computer paper**
- ☒ **Shredded paper**
Top tip: put it in an envelope!
- ☒ **Envelopes**
With and without windows
- ☒ **Printed items**
Magazines, newspapers, supplements, brochures, leaflets, junk mail, telephone directories and catalogues
- ☒ **Brown paper**
Must be recycled with card



Can't be recycled

- ☒ **Tissues**
Wipes, cotton wool or make-up pads
- ☒ **Hygiene products**
Nappies, wipes or sanitary towels
- ☒ **Foil-based gift wrapping**
Non-paper gift wrap or bags
- ☒ **Contaminated paper**
Paper stained with food, grease, paint or dirt, e.g. kids' paintings, greaseproof or baking paper
- ☒ **Sticky papers**
Post-it notes, sticky labels or tape
- ☒ **Glitter**
Anything with glitter on!

Top tips for plastic recycling

Soft plastics

- These are collected at lots of supermarkets

Refill and reuse

- For example refill soap dispensers and spray bottles

Don't mix materials

- For example, when doing junk modelling use all plastics so it can be recycled

Ban glitter

- It looks pretty but it's a micro-plastic and can't be recycled. A tiny bit can contaminate other waste that might have been recyclable
- Check before you buy eco-glitter as some can't be recycled in Essex

Plastic food packaging

- Clean pots, tubs and trays are often accepted for recycling
- Check out your local council's website to find out what's accepted in your area

Hard plastics

- Toys, buckets, boxes and washing baskets can't be accepted for recycling
- Why not clean, fix and pass these on for someone else to enjoy



Top tips for food waste

Reduce your food waste

- Not wasting food is the best way to reduce your carbon footprint and save money

Dispose of food waste properly

- Either compost your food waste or recycle it in a food waste bin
- Food waste that goes into landfill releases harmful greenhouse gases

Community

- Lots of supermarkets have community engagement teams who ensure food gets donated to good causes if it can't be sold before it expires

Buy local

- This reduces carbon emissions from transporting and storing food
- Recommend local producers to your family and friends, and help children learn about the food journey from production to plate

Climate friendly meals

- Reduce your dietary carbon footprint by eating meals with less red meat

Climate-friendly food days

- These could include vegetarian/plant-based options and meals sourced from local produce
- Try meat-free Mondays, or Essex-only meals where everything you eat comes from Essex

Grow your own

- Showing children where food comes from can help encourage them not to waste it
- Compost garden waste and vegetable peelings to make fertiliser to grow new vegetables



Top tips for saving energy

Do an energy audit

- Hiring a company that specialises in energy and sustainability audits could bring long-term financial gains

Timers and automatic settings

- Monitor thermostats and use timers to switch things off automatically
- Implement a 'switch off' policy led by an 'energy champion' and use labels to show what should be left on or turned off



Use energy-efficient equipment

- Explore upgrading to newer, more energy-efficient equipment

Move to LED lighting

- It's more environmentally-friendly, needs less maintenance and lasts longer

Renewable energy tariffs

- Talk to your energy supplier about installing a more energy efficient boiler, a renewable energy source like solar panels, or even a heat pump

Insulation

- Poor insulation lets heat escape resulting in colder working conditions, keeping the heating on for longer, increased costs and more environmentally damaging emissions produced

Ventilation

- Opening windows on opposite sides of a building floor is the simplest way to ensure proper airflow and the extraction of polluted air

Overheating

- Shade from trees can reduce overexposure to the sun and promote biodiversity
- Using electrical items generates heat so consider how and when they're used



Top tips to reduce the carbon footprint of your early years setting

The outdoors

Create a garden

- Allowing a part to grow wild can increase biodiversity, encourage wildlife and ensure the ecosystem is in balance
- Seeing wildlife helps children understand that we must share our space with nature

Grow your own

- Growing your own fruit and vegetables and keeping chickens for eggs can significantly cut your dietary carbon footprint and is a fun project to share with the children

Composting

- Transform your waste into valuable soil improver to use across your garden to maintain a thriving ecosystem for bugs that sucks up carbon from the atmosphere

Create a gardening club

- Encouraging the children to garden is fun and helps them learn about the natural world and where some of our food comes from

Your building

Insulation

- Poor insulation lets heat escape resulting in colder working conditions, needing the heating on for longer, increased running costs and the production of more environmentally damaging emissions
- Could you install a more energy efficient boiler, or even a heat pump?

Energy saving

Energy audit

- Consider switching to renewable energy tariffs more energy efficient suppliers
- Explore installing a renewable energy source, such as solar panels

Implement a 'switch off' policy

- Appointing an 'energy champion' volunteer responsible for monitoring thermostats and ensuring all computer monitors and lights are switched off when not in use (perhaps at lunchtime and at the end of the day)

Waste

Consider the waste hierarchy

- Reducing the amount of waste thrown away is the most effective way to reduce your waste carbon footprint
- Are there areas where you can reduce how much you throw away?
- For a week keep a record of how much is thrown away, then try to reduce this the following week
- Recycling is important so take the time to organise your recycling and dispose of everything correctly

