

SCHOOL WASTE AUDIT -Learn What's In Your Trash



Date _____ School Name _____ Audited Area _____
 Auditing Team (Student Name(s)) _____

THE AUDIT

1. **TEAM UP-** Get into your teams and determine jobs: Recorder/ Collector(s)/ Counter(s), Monitor, etc.
2. **PREP & SAFETY-** Put on gloves and review safety and general directions before beginning
3. **COLELCT-** Bring containers being audited to the auditing area (With sorting containers/ tarp if needed, etc.)
4. **SORT, COUNT and TALLY** items from the trash into either the **TRASH “table”** or the **RECYCLABLES “table”** (If auditing more than one container note the classroom or campus location it is from.)
5. **TOTAL** your counts of each item and then total the **“TOTALS”** column.
6. **TAKE PICTURES IF YOU CAN.** (They're helpful for reports and Power Pt. presentations and sharing your findings.)
7. **CLEAN UP.** Wash hands. Return containers and put away tools.

AFTER THE AUDIT

1. **DISCUSS** findings with group.
2. **ANSWER** questions (on other side).
3. **REPORT, SHARE** findings with students, teacher and school administrators.
4. **DEVELOP** and **DECIDE** on **RECOMMENDATION** and **PLAN** of **ACTION!**

TRASH	ITEMS FOUND	TALLY _____	TALLY _____	TALLY _____	TOTALS
	Plastic Food Containers (like: cups, juice boxes & pouches)				
	Plastic Wrappers (like: chip, snack, spork wrappers)				
	Plastic Straws				
	Styrofoam				
	Food				
	Dirty Paper (Like towels & tissues, paper cups & lunch trays)				
	Other				
	TRASH TOTAL				
RECYCLABLES	ITEMS FOUND	TALLY _____	TALLY _____	TALLY _____	TOTALS
	Glass Bottles/ Jars				
	Plastic Bottles / Containers				
	Metal/Aluminum Cans				
	Cardboard				
	Paper Packaging (Like clean lunch trays)				
	Paper used on one side				
	Paper used on both sides				
	Construction Paper				
	Magazines/Books				
	Other				
REYCLABLE TOTAL					

TOTAL TRASH ITEMS _____ + TOTAL RECYCLABLE ITEMS _____ = TOTAL _____

MORE TO DO and QUESTIONS TO ASK

- 1) From the items found, what percentage can be recycled? _____
The Math: $(\{\text{Total of RECYCLABLES}\} \div \{\text{Total of recyclables \& trash amounts}\}) \times 100 = \%$?
- 2) What percentage can be composted (food)? _____
The Math: $(\{\text{Total of FOOD}\} \div \{\text{Total of recyclables \& trash amounts}\}) \times 100 = \%$?
- 3) What percentage is actually “trash”? _____
The Math: $(\{\text{Total of TRASH}\} \div \{\text{Total of recyclables \& trash amounts}\}) \times 100 = \%$?
- 4) Which items were trashed the most? _____
- 5) Did you find “single use plastics”? If so, how many items did you find? _____
- 6) Create a list of alternatives for the “highly trashed” items. _____
For example, cloth bags instead of plastic shopping bags, or reusable water bottle.
- 7) Of the paper found in trash cans, estimate percentage used on both sides of the paper? _____
- 8) Interview students and teacher to find out if they use both sides of the paper when copying or taking notes.
If not, why not? _____
- 9) Is there a recycling program on campus? _____ Is it being used? _____ If not, find out why. _____
- 10) If there is a recycling program do you think that students and staff could recycle more? _____
What materials? _____
How can your team encourage this? (raise awareness, awards, etc.) _____

MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS – HERE’S SOME IDEAS

TEN THINGS YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE WASTE IN CLASSROOM/OFFICES

Use paper on both sides for copies and turning in assignments. Most copiers can make double sided copies	Use refillable pens and pencils. Arrange with your teachers to turn in assignments electronically.
Avoid printing extra handouts	Reuse manila envelopes and file folders
Keep a box of scratch paper to be used by others	Purchase office supplies from manufacturers that use less packaging and recycled materials.
Maximize use of overhead projectors, blackboards or dry-eraser board to minimize handouts.	Buy recycled paper products
Recycle paper and cardboard	Arrange extra credit for students who monitor trash cans.

TEN THINGS YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE WASTE at LUNCH & SNACK

Use reusable trays, dishes, cups and utensils.	Buy supplies packaged in recyclable materials.
Use a sports bottle that can be refilled.	Buy food supplies in bulk.
Serve sandwiches in plastic wrap instead of packaged plastic containers.	Use refillable condiment bottles like ketch up and salad dressings and purchase refills in bulk quantities.
Recycle cans, plastic, bottles and paper.	Collect food waste for composting
Use utensil and napkin dispensers so students can take only what they need.	Write a letter to your District’s Nutrition Services Director to share your findings and recommendations for reducing waste during lunch and snack.

