

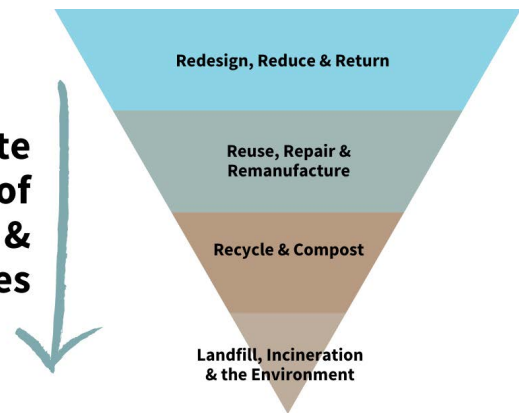


TRUE Home Zero Waste Audit Toolkit

Learn more about zero waste certification at true.gbci.org

Thank you for your commitment to performing a TRUE At-Home Zero Waste Audit. The goal is not only to evaluate what is in our bins but, more importantly, how we change our lifestyle and purchasing choices to create a closed loop, circular economy. The TRUE Rating System was developed to achieve zero waste, closed loop, circular facilities and businesses, but many of the same principles can be adapted to any home.

Zero Waste Hierarchy of Highest & Best Uses



STEP 1: REVIEW YOUR SERVICES

Review the website of your municipal waste and recycling service providers and the acceptable materials to be recycled and composted in your area (please note that each municipality has different requirements). Research your providers' services like hazardous waste pick-up/drop-off, donation programs, and pricing incentives for composting and recycling. Reviewing this information will provide a solid understanding of local opportunities to divert additional household waste from the landfill.

STEP 2: INVOLVE YOUR HOUSEHOLD

If applicable, talk to any other members of your household about what materials go into each bin (waste, recycling, compost, etc), encourage them to ensure recyclable items are clean and dry to avoid contamination (and eliminate your recycling bin liner), discuss what recycled items will be made back into (here are a few examples of closing the loop), and get them on board to help with your ZERO waste audit.

STEP 3: CONDUCT A ZERO WASTE AUDIT

A typical waste audit aims to eliminate “contamination” by ensuring materials are in the right bin. A zero waste audit takes this a few steps further with the goal of learning from our waste habits and committing to behavior changes that decrease what we throw “away”. Zero waste audits emphasize the following key actions: **Refuse, Reduce, Return, Reuse (or donate), Repurpose, Repair, Recycle, ReEarth (compost), and Recreate.**



OPTION 1: The night before your waste and recycling are picked up, complete the below zero waste audit process.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

Gloves and masks	Tarp (or trash bags)
Pencils and paper	Blue tape and marker
Clipboard	Service provider recycling and composting requirements

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Lay out three tarps or other protective material on a large surface and label them 1. “landfill”, 2. “recycling” or 3. “compost” (you can use blue tape and a marker, or make reusable labels for your next waste audit!)
2. Empty your trash, recycling and composting bins onto the corresponding labeled tarp
3. Remove any contamination from each tarp (i.e., move all trash that was in your recycling bin to the recycling tarp; all recycling in your compost to the recycling tarp and so on)
4. Arrange materials from each tarp (“landfill”, “recycling” and “compost”) into specific sub-categories (i.e., All straws in one pile, all paper napkins in one pile) – use the data collection form on the next page to document the materials you sorted.
5. Once all your materials are sorted, then have a discussion with your household and make commitments on how you can: Refuse, Reduce, Return, Reuse (or donate), Repurpose, Repair, Recycle, ReEarth (compost) and/or Recreate each individual category/item.

The ultimate goal is to eliminate your waste bins: trash, recycling and composting! We know this is an aspirational goal, so don't be afraid to take small steps towards reducing your impact.

SIMPLE ACTIONS TO REDUCE YOUR IMPACT

1. Use reusables: cloth napkins, rags, handkerchiefs, dishes, dryer balls instead of dryer sheets, reusable cotton rounds for makeup, etc.
2. Clean naturally: you can make your own cleaners with baking soda, vinegar, citrus, etc. or you can choose to buy naturally derived cleaning products with reduced packaging.
3. Shop locally: shopping at your farmers market supports local farmers, reduces packaging (bring your own bags) and promotes a healthy lifestyle.
4. Buy less: if your zero waste audit shows that you are throwing away or composting food, consider buying less of those items in the future.
5. Donate early and often:
 - a. For furnishing, clothing, art supplies, etc.: Go through your closets, cupboards, etc. every couple of months and donate while items are still in good condition.
 - b. Food: Review your refrigerator and cupboards often so you can donate prior to expiration dates. Going on vacation or moving? Plan ahead and donate.
 - c. Look for alternative places to donate: women's shelters, churches, senior centers, your friend or neighbor, social media (Nextdoor or Facebook Marketplace).
 - d. Check in with your local city, Salvation Army or American Red Cross and ask if there are any ongoing needs for disaster survivors. There is always a lot of focus on disasters when they are happening, the need often continues for months or years.



ACCESS ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ABOUT ZERO WASTE HOME AUDITS

[TRUE Zero Waste Rating System](#)
[Cut Out Cutlery from your takeout orders](#)
[EcoRise's Waste Audit Lesson](#)

[Composting at Home](#)
[Reusables are safe during COVID](#)
[EPA Food Recovery Program](#)

Remember that zero waste is a journey;
every small step you take can make a huge difference
in your local community, country and the world.

Follow TRUE on social to stay up-to-date with the latest zero waste news.



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