

# RECYCLING PROCESS: HOW OFTEN CAN ITEMS BE RECYCLED



We should all be aware that some recycled materials can only be recycled a couple of times before they are downcycled, while others can be recycled again and again. Below is a list of the most common items recycled along with how many times they can be recycled.

## ALUMINUM

Aluminum is a great recycling material because it can be recycled again and again without any degrading to the material. It is estimated that over two-thirds of all aluminum produced is still being used to make new cans today.

## PAPER

Paper starts out with long fibers that are a key for allowing it to be recycled. After 5 to 7 times, the fibers continually get shorter until they are too short to be recycled again. At this point, the material is processed into paper paste and can be used to make newspaper or egg cartons.



## GLASS

Recycling glass is 33% more energy efficient than making new glass from raw materials. Glass can be recycled again and again without any concerns of degrading. There are different types of glass, so check with your recycler to help them insure the glass is sorted properly.

## PLASTIC

Plastic can only be recycled 1 or 2 times before it is downcycled to make clothing, fleece or lumber. This remains a positive on the energy efficiency over the use of raw materials. The downside is a lot of the downcycled items do not get recycled at the end.

## METAL

Metal can be recycled over and over without any degrading to the material.

Lesson learned, when possible buy items that can be recycled again and again such as metal, aluminum and glass.