

Fact Sheet

Steel

Recycling steel cans protects our environment by saving precious natural resources, saving energy and saving landfill space.

Recycling Steel

Steel cans and aerosols collected from kerbside recycling bins are sorted from the other recyclables at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) using a large magnet. The cans and aerosols are then compacted, baled and stored ready for collection. The steel bales, along with other scrap steel collected in your local area, are purchased by a steel recycling company and transported to a factory where they are recycled.

Steel cans are usually "detinned" prior to being remelted for recycling, where the thin layer of tin used to protect the steel from rust is removed. The steel is fed into a specialised furnace, then poured as a liquid into a mould where it solidifies. The new slabs of recycled steel created during this process are then used to make new cans, aerosols, car bodies, furniture and a range of other products.

Steel is 100% recyclable and can be used over and over again without needing to add virgin/raw materials. More than just cans are collected for steel recycling. Scrap metal from cars, fridges, washing machines and even building materials such as roofing iron can be recycled.

It is essential to check with your local Council to see exactly what steel items are recyclable in your local area, and where large steel items can be dropped off.

Steel recycling tips

- Rinse out cans
- Place the lid inside the can and squash it flat
- Remove plastic lids and nozzles from aerosols
- DO NOT SQUASH AEROSOLS

What can/cannot be recycled in your kerbside recycling bin?



- All steel cans and aerosol cans

Note: All steel products are recyclable, however, only certain steel products can be collected through your kerbside recycling system (check your local Council's recycling specifications).



- Large pieces of scrap metals from appliances, equipment, vehicles and machines. These materials need to be delivered to your local Council Landfill Facility, or to a specialised scrap metal plant.

Did you know...?

Every year each Australian sends around 3.5kg of steel cans to landfill – that's enough steel to make 40,000 fridges

Using scrap steel saves up to 75% of the energy needed to make steel from virgin materials, reduces air emissions by 86% and reduces water pollution by 76%

Every tonne of steel recycled saves 1,131kg of iron ore, 633kg of coal and 54kg of limestone

It takes around 15,000 steel cans to form 1,000kg (1 tonne) of recycled steel

3,500 new cans are made every minute

Source: CanSmart Steel Can Recycling Campaign