

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

How to Conduct a Waste Sort

Beginning the Waste Sort

- A. Assemble the waste sample to be sorted, using either one day's worth of waste or an otherwise representative sample of waste from your organization.
- B. Obtain containers for holding the sorted wastes and a scale for weighing the samples. The size of the containers depends on the amount of waste to be sorted. Office wastebaskets might work well for small sorts. For larger sorts, 30- to 50-gallon plastic containers, garbage cans, or large corrugated cardboard boxes will be needed.
- C. Weigh the empty containers that the sorted wastes will be placed into and record these weights on a label on each container.
- D. Sort the waste sample by major component (paper, plastics, glass, metal, compostable organics, other),
- E. Further sort each major waste component into more specific component subcategories (e.g., glass into clear, green, and; or paper into high grade, newspaper, and magazines).
- F. Place the sorted materials into separate labeled containers.

Calculations

- A. Weigh each filled waste container and subtract the weight of the container to obtain the net component weight. Use the worksheet to record the findings of your waste sort by filling in the white spaces only. All other colored spaces will be automatically populated.