



Toothpaste Tubes: May be recyclable!

For decades, toothpaste tubes have been a persistent *recycling headache* — and a surprisingly large contributor to household plastic waste (around 252 million tubes a year). Traditionally, most tubes were made from mixed materials: layers of different plastics and a thin aluminium barrier. That combination made them almost impossible to recycle through standard kerbside systems, and as a result hundreds of millions of tubes sold every year ended up in landfill or incineration.

A Shift to Single-Material Plastics

The good news is that from 31 March 2026 toothpaste packaging will be redesigned around a single recyclable plastic, notably high-density polyethylene (HDPE), the same kind of plastic used in milk bottles and is widely processed through standard plastic recycling streams, so you may be able to add them to your home plastic recycling.

Tips

- Check that the tube says 'HDPE' on it. If not, put it into the bin.
- Squeeze out as much paste as possible before recycling — residual product can reduce recovery rates.