

7 Steps of Integrated Waste Management

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| Step 1 | Reduce | As a society, we should make less waste overall. For example, we should consider buying items that have little or no packaging, rechargeable batteries, etc. |
| Step 2 | Reuse | We should reuse items we normally throw away. For example, using paper lunch bags for multiple times instead of throwing them away after just one use. |
| Step 3 | Recycle | We should remember to recycle items that are recyclable (paper and plastic items will have a recycling code stamped on the bottom to tell us if they can be recycled). Also, we can “close the recycling loop” by buying items made from and packaged in recycled materials. We need to continue looking for new ways to recycle currently non-recyclable items. |
| Step 4 | Compost | We should put our yard waste and food scraps either in personal or community compost areas to make humus rich soil. |
| Step 5 | Incineration (waste-to-energy) | We should burn trash and use the heat to produce energy for power plants, etc. This should be done on the industrial scale, not at a personal level. |
| Step 6 | Landfills | We should store any leftover waste in a sanitary landfill to reduce the risk to the environment. |
| Step 7 | Incineration (no energy production) | We can burn trash just to reduce the amount of space it takes up. This is often done on an individual level (outside a single home), but it can also be done on an industrial scale. This type of incineration is really the last resort and should be the last thing that we do as it creates and contributes to many serious environmental hazards. |