

recycle-more schools activities

11+



packaging audit

In this activity you will analyse the amount of packaging that is brought into your home each week by carrying out a packaging audit.

what to do

1. Tell your family that you will be looking at the packaging around the products your family buys each week. You will be counting the number of layers of packaging around each product, and analysing what the packaging is made from. Ask your family to help you do this.
2. Design a sheet that will be used to record the items bought each week Here is an example...

How packaged?	Number of items bought	Packaging is made of...				Packaging can be recycled	Packaging can be re-used	Packaging cannot be recycled or re-used
		Cardboard / paper	Plastic film	Aluminium	Plastic			
Loose								
One layer								
Two layers								
Three layers								



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1. Ask your parents if you can accompany them to the shops. Look at the various types of packaging available. Choose one example from your shopping of a product you think is over packaged. Take the packaging to school as an example.
2. After one week your teacher should collect all the record sheets. You can now study these as a class to find out:
 - The ratio of loose to packaged items e.g. there are 5 loose items bought for every 20 packaged items.
 - The average amount of packaging (number of layers).
 - The breakdown of packaging materials – which material is used the most? Why do you think this is?
 - How much of the packaging can be recycled?
 - How much of the packaging can be reused
3. Display your results using graphs like the one below:



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Discussion

1. What does over-packaging mean?
2. What proportion of your weekly household rubbish is packaging?
3. Why is packaging important?
4. Can you think of items where increasing the packaging decreases the amount of overall waste? For example, what would happen if we sold eggs in paper bags instead of cardboard boxes?
5. Find out what UK industry is doing to reduce the amount of packaging waste. Look at company websites. You could even design a questionnaire to ask about packaging reduction. See www.incpen.org.uk for further information on the packaging industry.
6. List the ways in which you could reduce the amount of packaging rubbish thrown away in your home.

