

# Ten tips to design easily recyclable packaging



## MAKE IT EASIER FOR CITIZENS

### 1 Easily separable packaging components

Labels, caps, components of different materials... The ideal design compels the consumer to separate the components after consuming the product.

You can facilitate proper recycling by including this symbol on your packaging:



### 2 Large containers should be foldable

To fit in the appropriate recycling receptacle and reduce their volume.



**Plastic and metal packaging, and cartons:**  
Less than 30 cm in diameter.



**Paper/cardboard packaging:**  
Measuring less than 1m x 13 cm.

## MAKE SURE THAT YOUR PACKAGING CAN BE CLASSIFIED AND PROPERLY RECYCLED

### 3 Use compatible materials

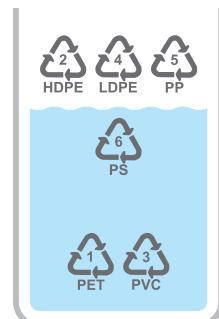
Packaging and components (labels, caps, seals...) made from compatible materials. See next table:

	COMPONENTS						
BODY	HDPE	LDPE	PP	PVC	PS	PET	Paper
HDPE	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red
LDPE	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red
PP	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green
PVC	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green
PS	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green
PET	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green
Paper	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green
Aluminum	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green

For other combinations check our [Design for recycling tool](#)

### 4 Use materials of different densities

During recycling processes for plastic packaging material, separation is carried out via flotation /decantation, therefore the densities of the materials used in the packaging components should be different from the one of the main body.



### 5 Labels: no more than 2/3 of the packaging

In automated plants an optical separation system classifies plastic packaging by material. If 67% or more of your packaging is covered, it will be classified based on the material of the label.

If your packaging's design does not allow you from following this suggestion, then:

- Use a label made of the same material as the packaging.
- Use a label of a different density from that of the packaging.

### 6 Dark colours interfere with classification

Black and very dark colours interfere with the packaging's correct automated classification, as they absorb all the light emitted by optical separation systems.



## OTHER ASPECTS TO CONSIDER IN ORDER TO IMPROVE FINAL APPLICATIONS OF THE RECYCLED MATERIALS

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### Colourless packaging is better than coloured. With PET packaging, translucent or transparent packaging is better than opaque

Recycled material obtained from darker containers has fewer final applications than colourless containers, resulting in lower market value.

Opaque packaging, featuring dark colours, offers fewer final applications than translucent or transparent options. In addition, some additives used to darken the packaging could disrupt the manufacturing processes of some products (such as bottles and straps) obtained from PET recycling.

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### Use inks not included on the EuPIA exclusion list for printing inks

The components found in the inks used to colour packaging may contaminate recycled material, thereby precluding its use for the manufacture of certain products. Therefore, it is important that the components of these inks not appear on the 'Exclusion List for Printing Inks' issued by the European Printing Ink Association.



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### Use adhesives water-soluble at 85°C or hot melt adhesives soluble in alkali

Non-soluble adhesives may infect recycling material with contaminants, as they are not removed during the wash treatments carried out during the recycling process.

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### Whenever possible, avoid the use of silicones

Silicone, due to its characteristics, may adhere to the recycled material, thus limiting its use in certain applications.



## Does the design of my packaging make it easier to be recycled?

		Packaging 1	Packaging 2
	Components easily separable by the consumer		
	Compatibility between materials		
	Materials with different densities		
	Labels/sleeves < 2/3 the size of the packaging		
	Folded packaging made from plastic, metal and cartons: Diameter < 30 cm Cardboard/Paper packaging: Size < 1m x 13 cm.		
	Avoid black or very dark colours		
	Colourless packaging. Translucent or transparent packaging (for PET)		
	Inks not included on the EuPIA 'Exclusion List for Printing Inks'		
	Adhesives water-soluble at 85°C or hot melt soluble in alkali		
	Avoid the use of silicones		

If your packaging does not comply with one or more of the recommendations of this document, this does not mean that it is not recyclable, but rather that it could interfere in some way with current recycling processes in Spain.

This document sets forth some generic recyclability guidelines. If you need more detailed and specific information about your packaging, please see the 'Plastics Recyclability Guide' and the 'Design for Recycling' tool, both available at [www.ecoembes.com](http://www.ecoembes.com) (Private area for member companies).

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