

## What Do I Do With.....?

### Tech



#### **Devices**

Electronics are terrible for the environment when they end up in landfills, so recycling is essential. Small electronics can usually be dropped at Best Buy, Staples, & Target locations, usually with some limitations. The Best Buy Geek Squad can also erase your devices for you. Local governments often host periodic electronics recycling events where you can bring items. Almost everywhere old tube TVs are rejected or require YOU to pay a fee to recycle them.

You can also consider trade-ins and re-selling devices like cell phones. Best Buy offers some trade-in for devices, and websites like [Gazelle.com](http://Gazelle.com) or [DeCluttr.com](http://DeCluttr.com) will help you sell your devices, though you shouldn't expect a big payday.

#### **Printer Ink & Toner**

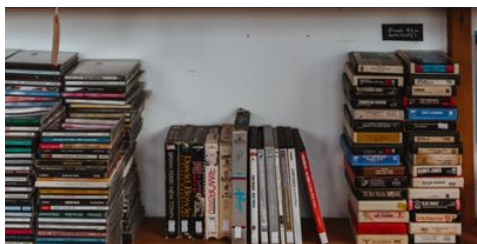
Printer ink can be recycled at major retailers, including Staples and Target. Staples and Office Depot offer credits for refills. HP has a [monthly subscription program](#) that sends you ink as your printer reports it's needed. When the new ink jet cartridges arrive, they include a postage-free return label.

#### **Batteries**

There are not many options for recycling single use batteries. According to the federal guidelines, single-use batteries are not considered hazardous waste and can go in the regular trash. Rechargeable batteries on the other hand, can be dropped in bins at Staples and Home Depot locations.

## What Do I Do With.....?

### Media



#### CDs/DVDs

These can be donated to your standard charities. Recycling options are very limited. [DeCluttr.com](http://DeCluttr.com) also helps you CDs, DVDs, games and books. They will give you an instant evaluation, and then free shipping to send your items.

#### Video Games & Consoles

GameStop still does trade-in of games, consoles and other devices for store credit. Good to check with your local store. They also have an app to determine the value of items.

#### Books

Check with your public library to see what their donation policy is. Of course, there are also used bookstores and your typical donation centers, all of whom may have limitations on what and how much they will take. Joshua Becker at Becoming Minimalist has a [great list of 20 ways to donate books](#). If you want to sell your books, you'll want to checkout [BookScouter](#). This website and mobile app allows you to find out the resale value of any books. Books can be sold on Amazon and Ebay among other places.



## What Do I Do With.....?

### Kid Stuff

#### Legos

You can send Legos back to Lego for FREE through the [Lego Replay](#) program, which donates them to various programs for kids. According to the site, Lego stores also provide shipping labels. The bricks you send will be sorted, cleaned and donated. Bricks that aren't in good enough condition are ground down to make new pieces or reused in molding to help generate power in their facilities.

#### Crayons

A number of programs accept crayons by mail. [Crazy Crayons](#) melts them down and distributes them to shelters and underserved communities. [The Crayon Initiative](#) makes new crayons and distributes them to hospitals. Locally, you might consider donating to hospitals, battered women's shelters, low-income day care centers and inner-city art programs.

#### Stuffed Animals

[Stuffed Animals for Emergencies](#) or SAFE is a national network of volunteers who collect stuffed animals, blankets, books, children's clothes, and baby items to provide comfort to children in traumatic or emergency situations.



#### Sporting Equipment

[Levelling the Playing Field](#) is a DMV-area organization that collects new and used athletic equipment in order to provide it to underserved and at-risk youth. This allows programs to allocate funds saved by lowering registration fees, expanding their scholarship programs, enhancing their existing athletic program and/or developing new ones. They have drop-off locations in Chantilly, VA, Baltimore, and Silver Spring, MD.

[Play It Again Sports](#) franchise locations will buy your used sports gear and fitness equipment to resell in the store. What they will take is often determined by the season and the space they have available, so it's advised to check in directly at your local franchise.

[Peace Passers](#) is an international organization that collects soccer gear and equipment to redistribute to communities that have limited access to proper gear.

## What Do I Do With.....?

### Household Materials



### Building Materials

Organizations that will take your leftover construction materials and appliances are hard to find. One of the greatest resources are the [Habitat for Humanity ReStores](#). These independently owned locations are tied to their local Habitat for Humanity chapters and accept hard-to-dispose-of items like furniture, appliances and surplus building materials. Most offer some level of pick-up service as well. The money raised by Habitat ReStores supports Habitat for Humanity's vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live.

### Plastic Bags & Films

Most of us know we can return our grocery bags to the store for recycling. However, in most cases, you can also drop OTHER types of plastic in those containers as well. Bread bags, plastic storage bags, cling wrap, and other plastic packaging are accepted by many. At many major supermarkets, those donation bins are managed by [Trex Decking](#), who turns your plastic into composite decking and railings. It is important to make sure they are clean, dry, and free of food residue.



### Paint

Paint is always a tricky one. Latex paint can generally be thrown in the regular garbage, but it is recommended you use a product to dry it out or harden it up. Paint disposal often incurs a charge, even at your local landfill. [Yuck Old Paint](#) is an organization that distributes good, reusable paint to international humanitarian construction projects, stateside theater groups and local licensed contractors. Paint that is not usable is downgraded into a solid waste material and processed for proper legal disposal per Commonwealth of Virginia DEQ regulations, mitigating any threats to the water and soil tables. All great things, and they will come get it from you. But the entire service has a costly service fee and per can cost. You can also contact your local high school, college, and community theater programs to see if they could use your old paint.

## What Do I Do With.....?

### Personal Items

#### Shoes

[Nike's Grind Program](#) recycles athletic shoes to make turf fields. Athletic shoes can be dropped off at any participating Nike Store.

[Soles for Souls](#) collects shoes and apparel to help people in a variety of ways. Some shoes go directly to victims of natural disasters and homelessness, others go to developing countries to where people can run small businesses selling donated shoes. They make it very easy to donate via drop-off locations at DSW stores, and also through its [partnership with Zappos](#) which allows for you to ship shoes to them at no cost to you. In their bins and in the Zappos boxes you can include clothing as well.

#### Wedding Dresses

There are a number of charities that accept wedding dresses & accessories, and you can ship to them. Most have thrift shops where they sell or give away dresses and use the money to support various initiatives. Dresses should be high quality and 5 years old or less.

[Adorned in Grace](#) Faith-based organization to fight human trafficking, based in Portland, WA

#### [Brides Against Breast Cancer](#)

Atlanta-based organization promoting its mission of early detection, awareness, and education about breast cancer.

#### [Cherie Sustainable Bridal](#)

Maryland based organization supporting people in-crisis seeking employment.

#### ***Alternative Programs & Ideas for Wedding Dresses***

The high end materials of wedding dresses can also be re-fashioned. Search Pinterest for ideas for reuse. Make christening gowns, flower girl baskets, include elements in handmade jewelry.

There are some kind-hearted organizations like [Forever Angels of Virginia](#), who make them into burial gowns for stillborn babies.



#### Bras

Bras can be in high demand in shelters. [Soma](#) retail stores host an annual event, typically in the summer, where you can not only donate your new or gently used bras, but also get a credit toward the purchase of one in their stores. The bras are donated to victims of domestic violence and homelessness.

## What Do I Do With.....?

### Personal Items



#### **Medication**

Unused medication should be disposed of properly both to protect the environment and make sure it is not taken inappropriately. You can take medication to most major pharmacy locations and they will dispose of it for you. In addition local governments often have drug take-back days as well. There are also products you can buy to dissolve the medications for safe disposal.

#### **Eyeglasses**

Walmart, Sam's Club, Goodwill, & Lens Crafters are among the many retailers who will take your used glasses and get them to people who cannot afford or do not have access to eyecare.

#### **Medical Equipment**

Medical equipment can be donated with limitations, and really requires some research in your local area. Throughout Virginia, the [Free Foundation](#) accepts walkers, canes, crutches, bath and toilet aids, wheelchairs, Hoyer lifts and other specialty equipment, bariatric equipment.

#### **Empty Beauty Product Bottles**

Beauty Product bottles can't always go into standard recycling because they can't be fully cleaned out. [Nordstrom Beautycycle](#) has solved this problem. In partnership with Terracycle, they have put bins in the beauty departments of their retail locations where you can drop these items.



## What Do I Do With.....?

Just Get this Stuff Out of Here!

### Give Back Box

The [Give Back Box](#) is a national program that really closes the loop of our shopping and decluttering habits. The program partners with major companies including Amazon, Loft, Overstock, Nordstrom and many more to make it possible. It's a win-win-win - your items go to charity, your boxes get reused, and your home gets lighter. You simply take all those Amazon (or really any) boxes and fill them with your unwanted items. Print a [free](#) label from their site and the items will be donated to the nearest participating charity. You can use UPS, Fedex or the USPS. You'll have to drop-off UPS & Fedex packages, but you can schedule a free pickup from the post office. If you want your items to go to a specific charity in their system, you can specify that if you are willing to pay the shipping. They accept just about anything with some minimal restrictions.



### Junk Haulers

Junk Haulers are a god-send when decluttering, moving, downsizing. They come with a truck, some strong arms, and take whatever you want gone away. It's not free, of course, but if you have a lot of stuff, it is usually well worth it. Most are priced by the size of your truckload. You want to look for one that is committed to donation, reuse and recycling. They tend to be franchises, so this commitment can vary from franchise to franchise. In the DC / VA area, Junk Luggers and [123 Junk](#) are committed to sustainability. [Junk Luggers of Gainesville](#) is also behind the [Remix Market in Warrenton](#). Cool place where they upcycle and sell items that might not have made the cut for donation, but with some love can become something new.

