

Good News Friday Edition 12 – All About Lids



DO WE KEEP THEM ON, TAKE THEM OFF, CAN THEY BE RECYCLED?

There are many different types of lids on food and drink containers we purchase from the supermarket. As keen recyclers it is good to know your options and save where possible materials being buried in landfill or polluting the environment.

The good thing about our yellow recycling bin is we can put a mix of packaging and food & drink containers into the one bin. However, one of the challenges we have is too effectively sort and recover as much of the different kinds of material as possible... the glass, cardboard & paper, plastic bottles, jars & containers, metal containers etc. The smaller the item, the greater the challenge. This is where you and I can assist and have the power to make a difference.

The general rule is to remove the lid. Plastic lids *are not* recyclable through the yellow bin. Many lids on plastic bottles pop off in the back of the truck, during the unloading and sorting processing and end up going into landfill waste at the end of the sorting process. However, a great organisation 'Lids for Kids' is supporting the collection of lids through schools, community groups, business and chain stores ([Home | Lids4Kids Australia](#)).

They collect milk bottle lids, water and soft drink lids, and UHT mild lids as seen in image 1. In the beginning, lids were collected by volunteers, washed, shredded, melted down into plastic resin filament and used in 3D printers to make prosthetic limbs for kids. The network has grown over the years as have the reuse options for the plastic. You can collect and donate to

collection centres or set something up as an independent system in your school or community group.

[Plastic bottle lids inspire 3D-printed prosthetic limbs, artworks, and future leaders - ABC News](#)

Steel lids can be on plastic containers, glass jars and bottles and cardboard containers. Steel is 100% recyclable and reusable over and over again. Remove the lids from the container and place them inside one of your used tin cans. This will contain the small lids and increase the volume of steel recovered at the yellow bin sorting factory. Finally, squeeze or press the open end closed to contain the smaller lids inside. See image 2. You can tread on the open end of the can with your shoe heel to do this.

Aluminium lids are mostly found on wine bottles. These too can be recycled and reused over and over again saving enormous quantity of electricity and water. You can add these to your aluminium foil ball. Also, I fold the small pieces of aluminium foil from yoghurt and dip containers and push them inside the lids before rolling up your foil ball. See image 3.