

# How are aluminium cans recycled?



**printwaste**  
Sustainable Recycling

# Can recycling step-by-step.



Did you know? Aluminium cans can be recycled and back on sale in just 8 weeks!

## Step 1: Collection

We'll collect your aluminium cans (mixed together with steel tins and plastic bottles) and transport them back to our recycling facility.

## Step 2: Sorting

Once there, we'll use a magnet to separate the steel tins and an eddy current separator to separate the aluminium cans from the plastic bottles. Your cans will then be compressed into bales (that weigh around 400kg!) and sent on to a specialist reprocessing plant.

*To find out more about what happens to your steel tins and plastic bottles, see their separate recycling process sheets.*

## Step 3: Shredding

At the plant, the cans will be shredded into small pieces (about the size of a 50p coin).

## Step 4: De-coating

The shredded pieces will then be blasted with hot air (approximately 500°C) to remove any paint or coating.

## Step 5: Melting

Now de-coated, the shredded pieces will be put into a large furnace and melted at high temperatures (750°C), turning them into a hot liquid – molten aluminium.

## Step 6: Casting

The molten aluminium will then be poured into moulds, cooled by a curtain of water and will harden to form ingots (blocks of metal).

## Step 7: Rolling

After this, the ingots will be transported to a rolling mill, reheated to 600°C and rolled into sheets. These will then be 'cold rolled' to the exact thickness required to be able to turn back into a can.

## Step 8: Recycled cans

To finish their recycling journey, the aluminium sheets will be sent on to manufacturers, who will turn them straight back into cans, ready to be sold all over again.

# We hope you found this useful & informative.

If you did, you'll be happy to  
know we have a whole bunch  
of process sheets for you...

## Recycling process sheets



Cans



Cardboard



Cartons



Paper cups



Glass



Wood



Plastics



Paper



Fluorescent  
light tubes



WEEE



Polystyrene



Tins



Non-recyclables

## Confidential shredding process sheets



Uniforms & clothing



Hard drives



Confidential paper

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