
Recycling

Amazon is committed to reducing our environmental footprint via recycling initiatives in our own operations and for our customers. We are developing new recycling infrastructure, inventing recyclable packaging materials and investing in initiatives that support the recycling industry across the U.S.

Recycling Infrastructure

In addition to optimising our recycling efforts for common materials such as cardboard, we are working to address the materials that are toughest to recycle in our operations. Plastic film, for example, is a difficult material to process and recycle, and is not accepted by most kerbside recycling programmes. To address this gap, Amazon is launching plastic film recycling at more than 55 fulfilment centres across our network. Through this programme, we expect to recycle more 7000 tons of plastic film per year, in addition to the 1500 tons of plastic already being recycled annually in Europe.

We are also exploring alternative solutions for less common materials that cannot be recycled. In the U.K., for example, we collect the silicone backing paper from delivery labels to convert into animal bedding. We are looking across our entire operations network to incorporate more of our own recycled plastic in products, packaging and operational processes.

Recyclable Mailers

In 2019, we launched a fully recyclable paper padded mailer that protects products during delivery while taking up less space in transit. This ensures that customer deliveries arrive undamaged and in recyclable packaging with a lower carbon footprint. The recyclable mailer is made of four layers of paper and a water-based cushioning material using components commonly found in the glue used to make cardboard. The lightweight recyclable cushioning was specifically designed to easily separate from the paper in the same way that print inks and other paper coatings are removed during the paper recycling process.

Recycling Partnerships

At Amazon, we know that our customers care about minimising the amount of waste that ends up in landfill. To improve curbside recycling in the U.S., we partnered with The Recycling Partnership, which supports communities and local governments with education, infrastructure and measurement related to kerbside recycling.

We also invested 10 million USD in the Closed Loop Infrastructure Fund to finance recycling and circular economy infrastructure in North America. With this investment, Amazon aims to increase product and packaging recycling, ensuring that material gets back into the manufacturing supply chain. Over the next decade, our investment in the Closed Loop Infrastructure Fund will improve kerbside recycling for 3 million homes in communities across the U.S., diverting 1 million tons of recyclable material from landfill and eliminating the equivalent of 2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide.



Amazon Second Chance

Amazon Second Chance provides information on how to trade in, recycle, or repair Amazon devices and products, how to recycle Amazon packaging and how to find open-box and refurbished devices. Customers may visit Second Chance to learn about and compare programmes that help eliminate waste and give products a second life.

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Customers who have eligible items they no longer want can discover the Amazon Trade-In programme, which allows them to receive an Amazon.com gift card in exchange for thousands of eligible items. Electronics, books, video games and more are also eligible for trade-in. In addition, customers wanting to responsibly dispose of their electronics can discover our device recycling programme for a variety of electronics and related accessories.

Amazon also gives customers several options to shop for great deals on open-box or gently-used items. Amazon Warehouse – an online store for great deals on quality used products including furniture, toys, instruments, kitchen appliances, clothes and more – has an extensive inspection process that ensures as many gently-used returned items as possible can be resold rather than being sent to landfill. Amazon Renewed offers refurbished, pre-owned and open-box products such as computers, laptops, smartphones, tablets, cameras, audio devices, home appliances and more. And Certified Refurbished and Used Amazon Devices provides customers access to pre-owned Amazon devices such as Echo, Fire Tablets, Kindle E-readers and more. Certified Refurbished devices have been refurbished, tested and internally certified by Amazon to look and work like new. All of these programmes reduce waste and encourage re-use by ensuring that valuable products can go back into the hands of customers rather than being sent to landfills.

Amazon also encourages customers to fix the things they buy before replacing, returning, or disposing of them. Amazon offers free Product Support (on a select but growing number of items) with the goal of helping customers maximise the useful life of the things they already own. Product Support serves seven global geographies with technical support, parts replacement and repair services. Helping customers responsibly dispose of Amazon packaging is another key component of Second Chance. Customers are able to view various types of Amazon packaging and are provided with instructions on how and where to dispose of the materials.



Product Donations

At Amazon facilities around the world, we are continuously expanding initiatives to maximise the positive impact of our surplus inventory. We contribute food and non-food product donations to hundreds of food banks and non-profits, reducing landfill waste and helping our local communities.

Amazon partners with Feeding America and Good360 to donate surplus inventory and distribute products to communities in need across the U.S. In 2019, Amazon and Whole Foods Market donated 37.5 million meals and 200,000 pounds (90,700 kilograms) of household essentials to Feeding America via its donation programme.

Throughout countries in Europe, we collaborate with local food banks and non-food charities to donate products to communities in need. Amazon is a long-term partner of the German non-profit Innatura, which brokers in-kind donations to charitable organisations. Through this partnership, Amazon has donated to more than 1500 charities benefiting nearly 500,000 individuals and families in Germany with donations including toys, shoes, clothing and pharmacy items, among others.

Amazon works with In Kind Direct, a national charity in the U.K. that manages the donation of surplus products to charities across the country. Since partnering with In Kind Direct, we have donated more than 8.7 million USD (7 million GBP) worth of products. In 2019 alone, we donated 1.2 million USD (1 million GBP) to over 2,000 charities and voluntary organisations across the U.K.

Amazon is also investing in automated systems that enable third-party sellers to donate their surplus inventory to local charities. This new programme has quickly become popular, with 97 % of sellers on Amazon in the U.S. opting to donate their surplus inventory. This programme also launched in the U.K. with nine local charity partners and will expand to France by the end of 2020. In the last three months of 2019 alone, third-party sellers donated a combined 3 million products to communities in need via this new automated system.

