

When it comes to recycling, experience is the best teacher.

Everybody knows the “three R’s.” So how about adding a fourth? Because starting a school recycling program is easy. It’s also a great way to get students excited about science and the environment. And for California’s schools, the cash refunds don’t hurt either. It’s up to you. But we’ll help. Here are some easy steps to get you started.

- 1 Get your Recycling Starter Kit.** Recycling bins, printable labels, posters and more are available at bottlesandcans.com or by calling 1-800-RECYCLE. And of course, you don’t have to stop with the starter kit. Just slap a label on any trash can and – voila! – you’ve doubled your capacity!
- 2 Designate a “Recycling Coordinator.”** Or put both a teacher and a student in charge. This job takes initiative, a little organization, and the ability to motivate others. It’s a great opportunity for students to take the lead and to teach that recycling is everybody’s job.
- 3 Arrange for collection.** Of course, filling the bin is just part of the program. When it comes to actually getting bottles and cans to a recycling center, you’ve got options. First, contact your city or county recycling coordinator on the phone or online to see if on-site collection is available in your area. Of course, someone has to actually empty the bins. A perfect job for someone with little hands!
- 4 Place your bins.** In the classrooms. In the library. In the cafeteria. In gathering places or anyplace you’d put a trash can. When people see a properly placed and labeled recycling bin, you’ll find they can’t help but do the right thing. And don’t forget the teachers lounge!
- 5 Educate.** After all, there’s science to recycling! Make your program part of the curriculum, start discussions about the environment, or teach a little chemistry. And make sure both students and teachers know the meaning of CRV. (That’s California Refund Value.) Look at the label to identify beverage containers eligible for CRV. A ton of information is at your fingertips at bottlesandcans.com.
- 6 Make some noise.** It’s easy to get students and faculty excited about your program. Tell them it’s up to everybody to help. Hang posters. Send an email. Create a little chatter at recess. And find fun ways to reward recycling using the CRV refund money if you return the containers yourself. Above all, help everyone feel involved. A little motivation goes a long way.

Recycle.

