

All About Litter

Litter is any type of unwanted material that has been thrown away, blown away or left in the wrong place. Some common types of litter could include plastic bags, food wrappers, drink bottles and cans, and cigarette butts.

Litter can be found in places like parks, streets, beaches, creeks, rivers and even your front yard! It not only looks nasty but can harm people and the environment.

Where does litter come from?

Most litter comes from humans not disposing of their waste properly. Sometimes littering occurs when people just leave their trash lying around, and sometimes people dump a big pile of rubbish on the side of the road that gets blown around.

Littering is illegal in Australia and there can be big fines for not correctly disposing of waste.

What are the impacts of litter?

- Environmental impacts - Litter can cause harm to wildlife when they mistake it for food or become entangled in it. Stormwater can carry litter into water courses and pollute aquatic ecosystems. Litter in water courses may also end up in the sea where it can harm marine animals. Litter left on land can pollute soil ecosystems and the animals that live in the soil.
- Human health impacts - Litter can attract pests and bacteria, increasing the risk of diseases in humans and animals.
- Visual impacts - Litter also just looks horrible and can diminish our enjoyment and appreciation of the natural world.

Add your thoughts, ideas and questions here.



What can we do about litter?

The first thing we can all do is ensure the waste we create goes into the right bin.

We can also think of the 4Rs, and try to Reduce, Reuse, Repair and Recycle before making waste.

If it is safe to do so, we can also collect litter and place it in the bin so that it doesn't get the chance to pollute our environment. Always get an adult to help with sharp or dirty litter, and always wash your hands after handling litter.

Pieces of soft plastic (like bits of plastic bags) are the most common form of litter found in Australia, with cigarette butts coming in second place.

Source: [Clean Up Australia](#)

