



# making circles

A simple guide to cutting out  
classroom waste



# about this guide

This guide gives schools easy and practical steps to cutting out waste across key areas in the classroom. If we all take these small steps, together we can make a big difference.

This guide has been put together using ideas from 20 schools across Scotland and Ostrero's Making Circles workshops - ideas that are actually being used and working in schools.

The workshops explore how moving towards a Circular Economy helps us design out waste and is better for the environment. We're not just thinking about recycling but about how we can cut waste out entirely by designing, making and using things differently and by sharing more.

This guide will help your school cut down on waste going to landfill, decrease your carbon footprint and make the most of our world's precious resources - all of which is great news for the environment!

# how to use

On the front of this poster you will find **6 key areas**. Each area has between **4 and 6** tips on how you can cut down on waste!



food and drink



special occasions



playground and outdoors



clothes



electronics



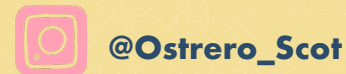
stationery and equipment

Tick off tips as you work through them. Some tips include ideas for activities the class can get involved in, such as making your own glitter. Many of these tips open up wider questions - e.g. how much energy does it take to send an emoji? - which can open up areas for further learning.



## Share your progress

Share your progress, photos and new tips via:



Encourage other classes and groups in your school to join in too - the more people that use it, the better for the planet! Talk about it! Lots of different people make decisions that make a difference - teachers, councillors, parents - talking to all of these people can help them make the best decisions for your classroom and for the environment. **Your voice matters!**

This guide was put together by Ostrero's Making Circles programme, working with 20 schools across Scotland who took part in our workshops in 2022:



**Armadale Academy,**  
Armadale, West Lothian



**Castleview Primary,**  
Edinburgh, Midlothian

**Acharacle Primary,**  
Acharacle, Highlands



**Inverlochy Primary,**  
Fort William, Highlands

**Lamlash Primary,**  
Isle of Arran, North Ayrshire

**Crathes Primary,**  
Crathes, Aberdeenshire



**Eastriggs Primary,**  
Annan, Dumfries & Galloway

**Echline Primary,**  
South Queensferry, Midlothian

**Crawforddyke Primary,**  
Carluke, Lanarkshire



**Larbert High School,**  
Larbert, Falkirk

**Pennyburn Primary,**  
Kilwinning, North Ayrshire



**Robert Douglas Memorial School,**  
Scone, Perthshire

**Moffat Academy,**  
Moffat, Dumfries & Galloway

**Portobello High,**  
Edinburgh, Midlothian

**St Nicholas Primary,**  
Broxburn, West Lothian

**Stow Primary,**  
Stow, Scottish Borders



**Victoria Primary,**  
Edinburgh, Midlothian

**St Peter's Primary,**  
Edinburgh, Midlothian



**Stobhill Primary,**  
Gorebridge, Midlothian



**Tullos Primary**  
Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire





If you are interested in learning more about the Circular Economy and Making Circles, please contact



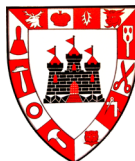
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Design and Illustrations by Hannah Riordan

# making circles

## food and drink

*Did you know that one third of food produced in the world goes to waste?*

- Swap disposable items for reusable ones e.g. reusable water bottles, cups and cutlery vs plastic disposable ones.
- No Waste Wednesday - aim for no food in the bin and promote a waste free packed lunch.
- Snacks without packs - bring in snacks with reusable or no packaging. Start once a week and build from there...
- Packed lunches - encourage reusable packaging in packed lunches eg tupperware or beeswax wraps - great to use in class or sell at the school fair.
- School lunches - work with your catering team to monitor food waste and ask them to feed this information back into their meal planning.
- School packed lunches - write to your council to make sure they provide environmentally friendly packaging eg paper wrapped sandwiches vs plastic packaging; card juice or water boxes instead of disposable plastic bottles.



## special occasions

*Did you know that 68,488 miles of Christmas lights end up in landfill in the UK each year?*

- Open a costume swap shop - ask people to bring in their old Halloween/World Book Day/Christmas costumes and swap them in for a new one.
- Replace disposable party or sweetie bags at Halloween or Christmas parties with reusable bags.
- Make or re-use decorations instead of buying in new ones.
- Use reusable cups, cutlery and crockery instead of disposable ones.
- If you have stalls, consider selling food, experiences or games rather than more stuff.

## playground and outdoors

*Did you know that bees help produce one third of the world's food supply? Let's look after them!*

- Start composting food waste.
- Use the compost to start your own veg or flower patch - and encourage bees and butterflies into your playground!
- Use food and flowers for cooking lessons, in school lunches (if your council allows this) and have a stall with excess produce for pupils to take home.
- Build a bug hotel.
- Ask local businesses for their "waste" products to create toys and activities for the playground e.g. large wooden spoons, wooden crates or large plastic tubes. These will be FREE and give another life to a waste product.



## clothes

*Did you know that £140m worth of clothing is sent to UK landfill each year?*

- Start a uniform swap shop.
- Unclaimed Lost Property - every few months use these items in a school swap shop.
- Start a Visible Mending club at lunchtime or after school - so many clothes that get chucked away can be fixed if you know how!
- Start a recycling point for glasses through your local optician or Terracycle.



## electronics

*Every time we search, send or store online we are using up energy.*

*Did you know that our gadgets and internet produce about the same amount of greenhouse gases as aeroplanes?*

- Emails:
  - Make sure you are off any unnecessary mailing lists.
  - Cut down on "reply all" emails unless really necessary.
  - Send links to documents instead of email attachments.
  - Delete unnecessary emails so they are not using up storage energy.
- Only send gifs, emojis and images if you really have to - each one you send uses up more energy.
- Delete apps on your phone that you don't use anymore.
- Delete photos you don't need from the Cloud.
- Unplug devices once they are fully charged or they still consume energy, known as "vampire power".

## stationery and equipment

*Did you know the average family uses 6 trees' worth of paper a year?*

- Replace plastic with card or paper where you can e.g. thick card instead of laminating posters and labels; card folders instead of plastic folders or book bags; replace plastic glitter with biodegradable glitter or make your own!
- Minimise printing wherever you can - every time you decide NOT to print something, put a button in a jar so you can keep track of how much paper and energy you have saved.
- Second hand stationery zone - ask everyone, teachers and pupils, to hand in any pens and pencils they don't use at the end of each term. Sharpen pencils and check that things work before putting them out for people to use as needed.
- Instead of chucking them away, melt down broken or tiny crayon ends to make new crayons or candles - great for a school fair or to use again in class.
- Start a recycling shed for community use.
- Use some of these great resources, which mean you can use pre-loved items for FREE or a very low cost, instead of buying new ones: [Re-Set Scenery](#) - lend amazing professional theatre sets to schools for FREE; [Circular Arts Network](#) - find all sorts of creative supplies; [Scrapstores](#) - a treasure trove of creative supplies.



Remember to let us know how many ticks you have at [mary@ostrero.com](mailto:mary@ostrero.com)

