



A Pocket Guide to Buying Recycled Paper



Postconsumer Content: Recycled from materials that have been used in homes and offices. Other recycled content comes from industrial and printing scraps. There is five times as much postconsumer material as industrial paper scrap.

(Include the brands of recycled papers that you find in local stores.)
Notes:

Copy/Office Paper

Many large office supply stores such as Staples, Office Depot, and Office Max carry recycled papers. Also investigate local stores: most that supply office products carry recycled paper. Search by Internet or the Yellow Pages of your phonebook (look under "paper" or "paper distributors"). You can also consider ordering direct by phone or online. Look at www.conservatree.org for more information.

When at the store:

Look for POSTCONSUMER RECYCLED CONTENT levels of 30% or more. Often, 100% postconsumer content is also available.

For copying and black-and-white printing, paper with a weight of 20 lbs. and 84 brightness is fine. A paper with 92 brightness will give better contrast for color printing. If you use heavier paper for special projects, be sure to use standard 20 lb. paper for the rest of your work. It saves resources.

There are many great recycled paper choices for resumes, letterhead, and business cards. Don't forget to look for recycled options in envelopes, folders, notepads, and other paper products, as well.

Other attributes to look for:

Processed Chlorine Free: This designates recycled paper that does not use chlorine-based bleaches in its manufacturing process.

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certified: This certifies that any forest fiber used was grown and harvested in a sustainable manner.

Green Seal Certified: This certification program looks at both recycled content and the use of chlorine.



Tissue Paper

On average, North Americans use 50 lbs. of tissue paper a year. This is one kind of paper that gives everyone the opportunity to save resources. Tissue products used at home account for 2/3 of the tissue market but most of the most heavily advertised brands have no recycled fibers at all. Since tissues are never recycled, it is important that the fibers in them have already had a long and productive life. Look at www.conservatree.org for more information on tissue and other products.

When at the store:

Look for POSTCONSUMER RECYCLED CONTENT. As with all paper, higher recycled contents are key.

Some tissue products will be labeled with recycled content that is not postconsumer (e.g. "made from 100% recycled content, 30% postconsumer"). This is good, too, as long as there is some postconsumer.

There are many with great quality, including from manufacturers such as Marcal, Cascades, Atlantic Packaging, Bay West, and Atlas Paper Mills as well as retailers such as Seventh Generation and Planet Inc.

Many store brands, including those at Trader Joe's and Whole Foods, have high recycled content as well.