

Power battery recycling

Across the UK thousands of shops will now recycle your old speakers for you when you buy new ones from them. Some retailers take back all old electricals for recycling or refurbishment, even if you're not buying something new. #zerowaste

Some councils collect electricals for recycling – either with your regular waste collection or by special arrangement. Contact your council or check their website to find out. Use our recycling locator.

All household waste and recycling centres have drop-off points for electricals (and batteries). Some also have a special area where you can leave items to be refurbished and passed on – maybe your unwanted speakers could go to a new home.

If you're changing up your sounds you might be ready to get rid of your old wired speakers, bluetooth speakers, amplifier, tuner, CD player, or even a cassette player – as well as the cables, plugs, connectors and remote control units that go with them. You can recycle anything with a plug, battery or cable – and it's easier than ever. Sell it, pass it on, donate it to charity or drop it off to be taken care of by specialists. You'll be saving precious materials such as gold and silver from being lost forever.

No. Wired speakers and bluetooth speakers are electrical equipment. And at the end of their useful life you should recycle them – like anything with a plug, battery or cable. Many bluetooth speakers have rechargeable batteries inside and if we don't manage these properly they can pose a fire risk in the waste stream. Check out our page on recycling batteries and devices with in-built batteries. But before you commit to recycling check out the options for repairing and donating yours.

Electricals display the crossed-out wheellie bin symbol either on the device or the packaging. This indicates hazardous waste and means you mustn't put the product in the general rubbish bin. You need to dispose of them properly to avoid polluting the environment and to save some of the planet's most valuable resources from being lost forever.

No – unless you've made special arrangements with your council to have bulky goods collected. Otherwise, don't leave electrical goods on the pavement in the hope that someone will pick them up. Instead, help manage the valuable and hazardous materials they contain properly – by finding your nearest drop-off or collection point for electricals by entering your postcode in our recycling locator.

When your speakers, amp, tuner, radio etc reach a recycling centre they will be broken down mechanically and by hand. The fragments are sorted into materials such as metals and plastics, and are cleaned. These go for further processing so that manufacturers can reuse them in new products or materials. Watch our video on How electricals are recycled.

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Find your nearest reuse and recycling point using our recycling locator. Or, if you're shopping, bear in mind that retailers now take back old electricals when you're buying new – including old speakers and other audio gear. You have 28 days to hand your old ones over for disposal from the time you purchase any new equipment. Some larger stores will recycle your old tech even if you're not buying from them. So you see it's easier than ever to recycle speakers and other audio equipment – find out more on appliance recycling at retailers.

Some charity shops welcome electricals such as speakers, smart speakers, amplifiers, tuners and CD players that are in good working order. See our page on donating electricals to charity shops.

Does it really need to be recycled? Perhaps your gadget could be fixed – find a blender mender. Could you donate it to a charity? Pass it on to someone you know? Or could you sell your unwanted blender?

Thousands of shops across the UK will now recycle your old food processor for you when you buy a new one from them. Some retailers take back all old electricals for recycling or refurbishment, even if you're not buying something new.

Contact us for free full report

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