

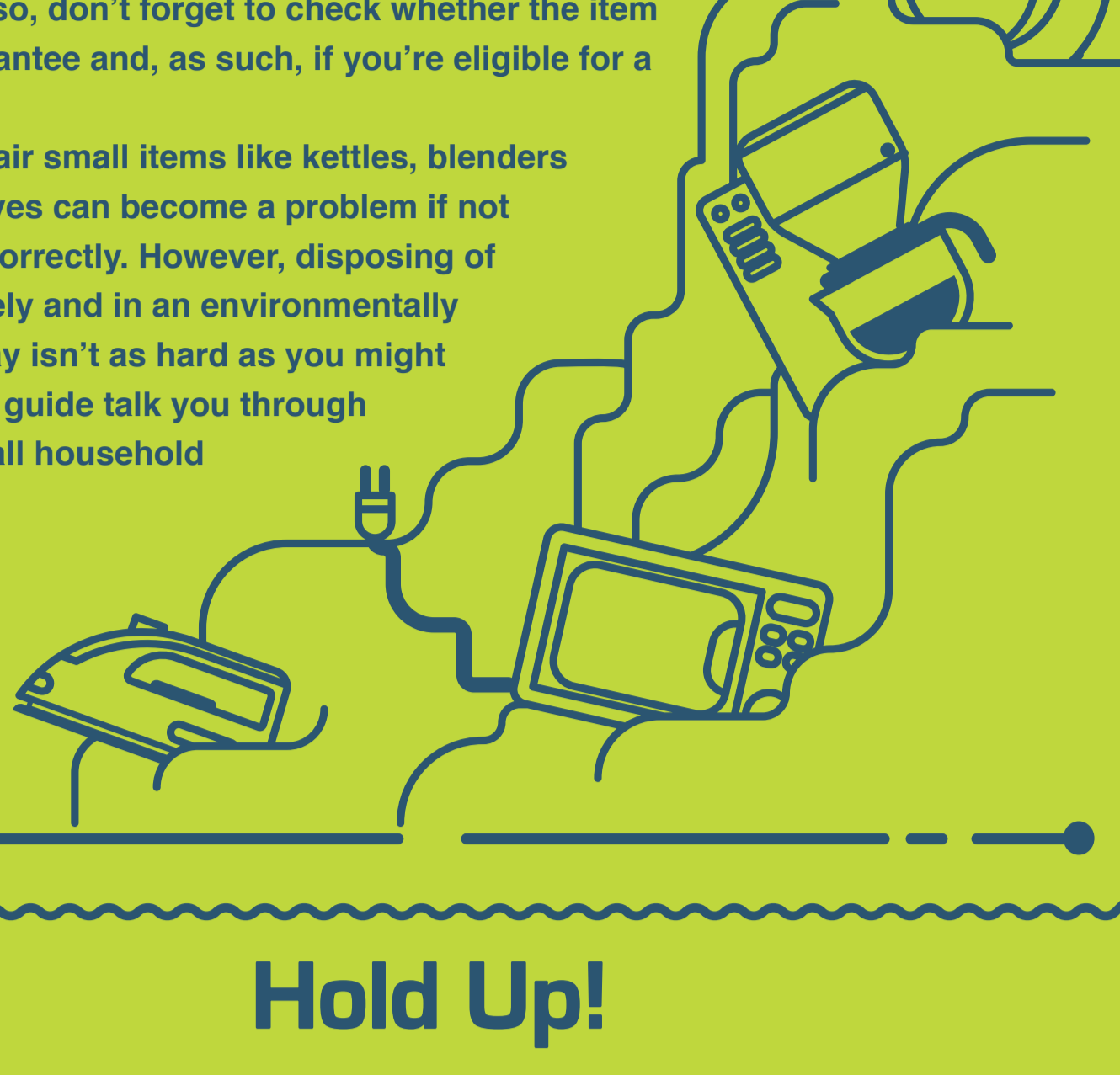


# The Essential Guide to Recycling Small Household Items

Nowadays, we're all too quick to throw seemingly broken appliances away – each a year an estimated 2 million tonnes of WEEE (Waste Electric and Electronic Equipment) items are disposed of by households and businesses. That equates to over 6 million electrical items! Sadly, a large proportion of these appliances end up in landfills, which isn't necessarily the best place for them...

In many cases it is possible to give the item a new lease of life through some simple repairs, the price of which is often cheaper and makes more sense than buying a new item – an average 170 million new electrical items are purchased in the UK each year! Also, don't forget to check whether the item is under warranty and, as such, if you're eligible for a replacement.

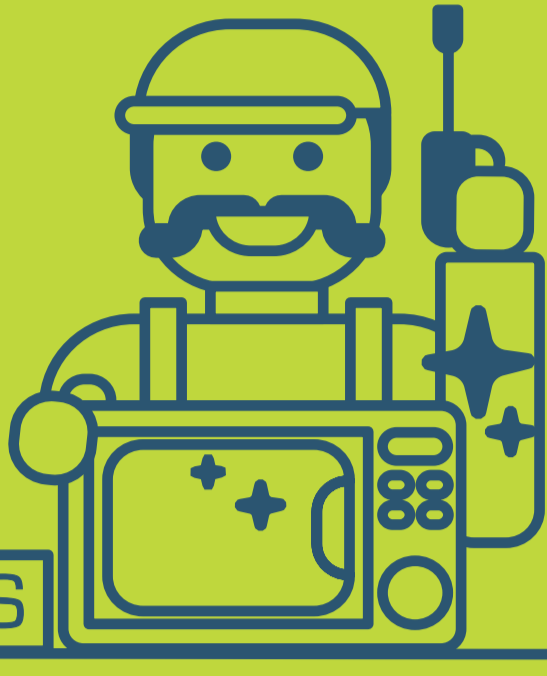
If beyond repair small items like kettles, blenders and microwaves can become a problem if not disposed of correctly. However, disposing of the items safely and in an environmentally conscious way isn't as hard as you might think. Let our guide talk you through recycling small household appliances.



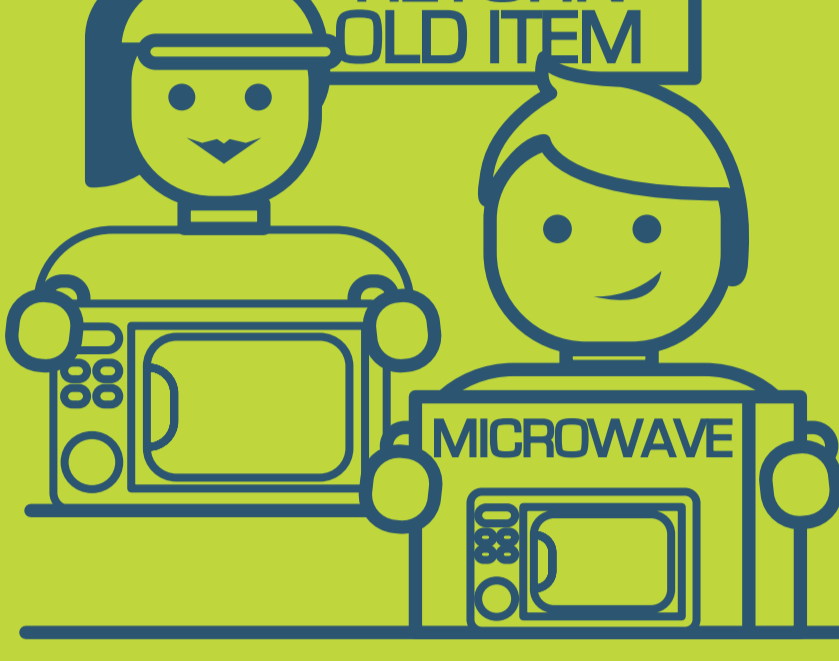
## Hold Up!

When an item seems to pack in there are a few simple things to check to see if you can find out what exactly has gone wrong. Sometimes it can be as simple as a fuse blowing that stops an appliance from working. Fortunately fuses are fairly easy to change and can be done in a matter of minutes. Ultimately, before jumping to conclusions and assuming an appliance is no longer useable, it's worth researching what the problem could be and calling in the professionals.

REPAIRS



## Take it Back

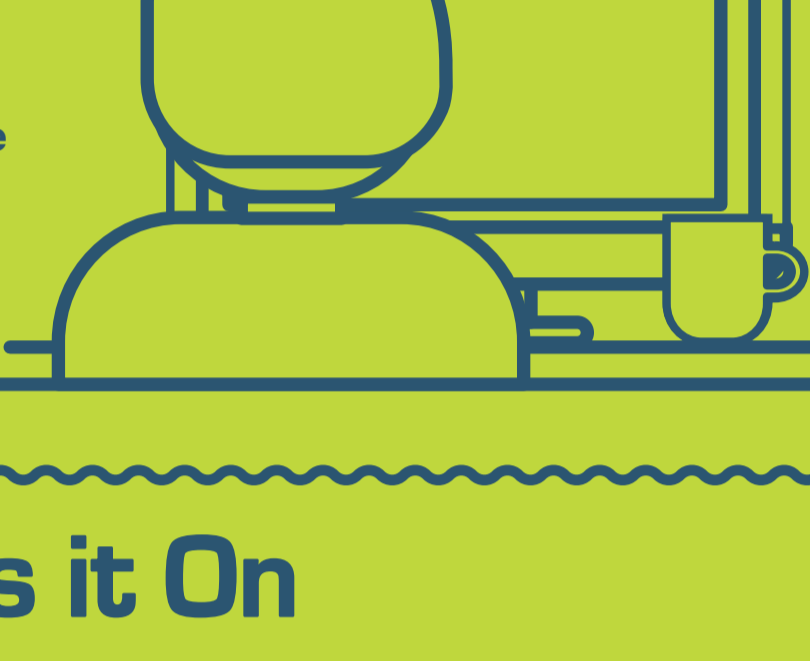


One of the simplest ways to recycle an item is by returning it to the store you bought it from. Many shops now offer customers the chance to return the old item to the store when buying a new one; some stores even offer a discount on the new item in return for the old one. Ask in stores for more details, but you could end up saving money while disposing of the old item responsibly.

## Local Recycling

Your local recycling centre can be a good option for recycling unwanted appliances. Check online first as some recycling centres only accept items in certain conditions. Alternatively, some local councils provide bins throughout the area, in which you can dispose of small electrical items, much in the same way as bottle and clothes banks. You can find your local recycling centre [here](#).

Some local councils give credits for recycling, as it saves them money compared to the item going to landfill. While individuals don't qualify for this scheme, community, charity, voluntary and not-for-profit groups can. For more information take a look on your local council website.



## Pass it On

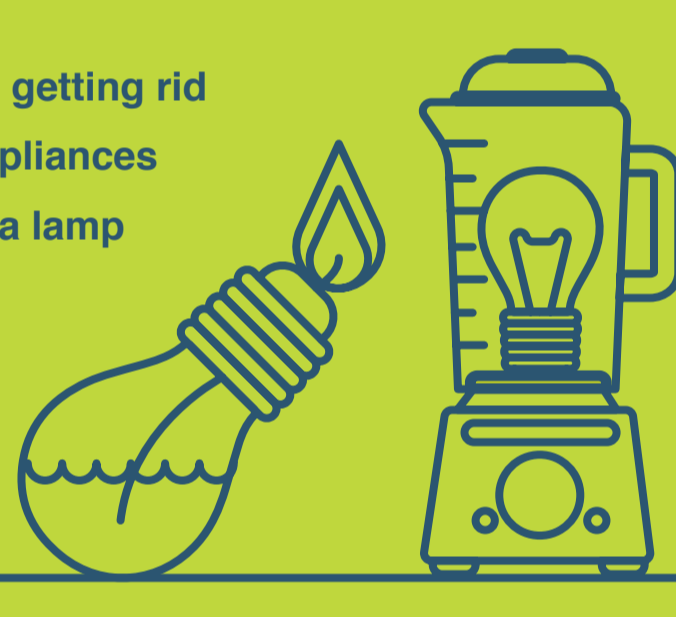
LOCAL SALE



Sometimes, with items such as blenders and microwaves, we simply decide we want a new one – the latest model to blitz a smoothie or steam some veg. In these cases why not give the old appliance away? If it's in good condition chances are you'll be able to find a new home for it. Whether you just give it away to friends or family, or pitch up at your local car boot sale to make a few pounds, if you can avoid throwing away appliances unnecessarily then do!

## Upcycle

Recycling appliances doesn't necessarily mean getting rid of them; instead, upcycling and repurposing appliances have become a hit. From turning a blender into a lamp to hollowing out an old TV set to use as a storage space, the web's full of tutorials to turn the ordinary into something that's a bit special!



## Donate

If the appliance is still in good working order you can donate it to a local charity, whether via a charity shop or enquiring whether local charitable groups require the item. Alternatively, you could donate the item to a local art or theatre group who might be on the lookout for props.

While it might take a few enquiries, giving the appliance to a worthy home can be a great way of getting rid of it whilst doing some good.

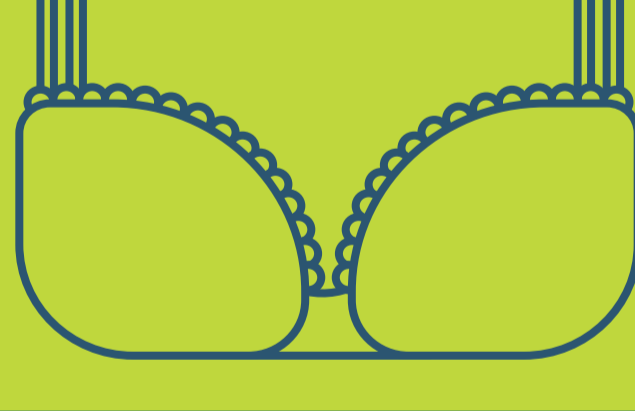


## Surprising Things You Can Recycle

### Bras

Getting rid of bras doesn't have to mean chucking them in the bin. Instead look out for bra banks, which are often organised by local charities; you can find your local bra bank via the [Against Breast Cancer](#) charity [here](#). Other means of disposing of them include donating them to charities such as [Oxfam](#) and [Breast Cancer Now](#).

Or if none of these options appeal you can take them to your local recycling centre and deposit them in the clothing and textile containers.



### Mobile Phones



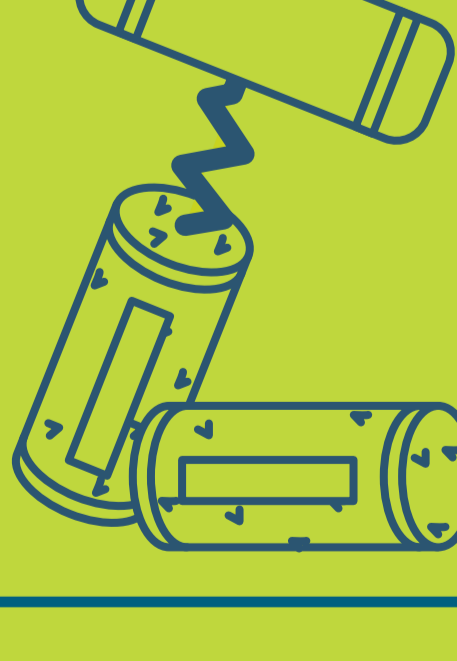
Chances are you'll have an old phone lurking at the back of a drawer somewhere around the house. Rather than leave it there gathering dust, why not recycle it? When recycling phones it is also possible to make some money, should you wish to take that route. Before doing anything else you remember to remove all personal data from the device!

You can also donate your phone to charity and help them raise money, for example [Oxfam's Fonebank](#) turns mobile phone donations into cash which they use to buy vital kit. You don't even have to donate all the proceeds from the sale of the phone to the charity; instead you can opt for anywhere between 25 to 100%. Although, 100% of the proceeds would obviously be gratefully received.

### Wine Corks

Corks can have a tendency to build up, and while they can't be recycled in the traditional way there are still a few options for getting rid of or reusing them. [Laithwaite's](#) stores around the country offer a recycling service if you take your used corks to your nearest branch. That said, many people choose to keep wine or champagne corks as a memento, either cutting a slice in the top in which to place a silver coin which they can then rub for good luck, or writing the date the cork was popped and keeping it in a special place.

Corks can also be useful around the garden, owing to the fact that natural cork is 100% biodegradable and can help plants retain water. Cut up the corks and grind into a fine mulch before placing in the plant pot with soil.



### Water Filters



Unfortunately, water filters can't be recycled at recycling centres or as part of household collections. Instead, most brands of Argos, Homebase and Robert Dyas offer a recycling facility of used cartridges, providing boxes in which you can deposit them.

### VHS Tapes

Once they were a massive source of entertainment, but nowadays it's likely VHS tapes you might own just take up precious storage space. Firstly, look into whether your local recycling centre accepts them; unfortunately it is becoming increasingly rare for recycling centres to accept VHS tapes, instead they're sent straight to landfill. The next course of action should be to enquire whether any local charity shops will accept them as donations.

