

# How do shrink sleeves fare with end-of-life disposal?

This guide is ever changing, as the waste management industry changes and develops to better serve the requirements of shrink sleeves and self-adhesive labels, and can depend on the recycling value stream, as well as the bottle type, label material, and shrink sleeve material.

## Shrink sleeves work with recycling systems.

- Shrink sleeves have **zero glue** (unlike self-adhesive labels)
- Shrink sleeves are more easily separated from bottle flake during the recycling process.
- In **light-barrier situations** a shrink sleeve allows for a **colourless-transparent** bottle to be used, as the shrink sleeve can act as the light barrier, allowing for **100% recyclability** of the **bottle**.
  - On the other hand, if **self-adhesive** labels are used with coloured or opaque bottles, the entire package goes to **landfill** (via the recycler).
- Some recyclers prefer to have the bottle/container unobstructed from the sleeve. This can be achieved by:
  - Adding dual perforation
    - This allows for **consumer tear-off** prior to disposal, also they **rip when crushed** by the recycler, exposing the PET bottle beneath allowing for 100% recycling of the bottle.
  - Maximising coverage of the sleeve over the bottle to 75%.
    - This allows for optical sorting machines to see the PET bottle and allow it to go through to the next recycling process.
- Shrink sleeves can be made with specialised PET film, enabling **100% recyclability** of **bottle** and **shrink sleeve**, depending on the recycler.

## Shrink sleeves give a better recycling yield than self-adhesive labels. And much less goes to landfill.

- 100% of a bottle with a shrink sleeve is recycled, as there is no label stuck to the bottle.
- Because the self-adhesive label sticks to the flake, on average only 60% of a bottle with self-adhesive labels is recycled (due to the label being stuck to the bottle flakes). The contaminated flakes are landfilled.



## Shrink sleeves have no wasted backing liner.

- **100% of self-adhesive labels are landfilled.** Shockingly, an **additional 60%** of material created by the **self-adhesive** industry (the **backing liner**) is also **landfilled**.
- In some areas, shrink sleeves are recycled. Most of the time, like self-adhesive labels, the shrink sleeve flake is landfilled. However, shrink sleeves have no backing liner, and thus zero additional waste.