



British Glass

Recycling flat glass

1. Why should I recycle flat glass?

Glass can be recycled infinitely with no loss of quality – it is the ultimate circular material. Remelting a tonne of glass saves up to 300kg of CO₂ thanks to reduced energy and raw material usage. Creating a circular economy means getting as much end of life flat glass back in to a glass furnace as possible, and eliminating avoidable waste being sent to landfill.

Recycling flat glass in the UK is harder than it should be. We have produced this guidance in response to regular enquiries from businesses and individuals looking for the best way to recycle their flat glass.

2. What do I need to consider?

Glass must be separated from other materials to be recycled. Contaminates such as metal will cause faults to develop during glass production. Even the smallest of faults may lead to an entire batch being rejected. Contaminated cullet will be rejected from remelt, and will be recycled in to aggregates or landfilled.

Common contaminants include **metal drinks cans, food packaging, cutting blades, spacer bars and floor sweepings**. Labelling flat glass bins/bags and ensuring site staff are trained and familiar with waste separation rules will help to reduce contamination.

Detailed guidance on cullet quality requirements, developed with British Glass: [The quality protocol for the production of processed cullet from waste flat glass | WRAP](#)

3. How can I dispose of flat glass?

Household waste – Windows, greenhouses, furniture or mirrors

Donate or repurpose – local charities or community groups might collect flat glass, particularly glass furniture and mirrors, to resell or refurbish.

Local authority household waste sites – some local authorities have flat glass bins at their household waste sites. It is important to check first as many sites **do not** have them and will direct flat glass to the general or rubble waste skip.

Window installers – when having new windows fitted, your installer will likely take back old windows. Check with them to understand whether they will be recycled.

Automotive glass – vehicle windscreens are made from laminated glass (PVB film sandwiched between two sheets of glass), which need to be de-laminated in order to be remelted. If your windscreen is replaced, it should be taken by the installer of the new windscreen to be recycled. If your vehicle is scrapped, the glass may be recycled, although this varies by facility.

Commercial waste – End of life windows collected by glaziers and offcuts from production

Commercial and industrial waste drop-off sites – private providers and local authorities operate drop-off sites for commercial waste in many areas. In some cases, these are located within Local Authority household waste centres, or at waste transfer stations, business parks and industrial estates. Look online or enquire locally to find your nearest drop-off site and for charging information.

Local authorities which do not provide chargeable commercial waste drop-off at their household waste sites cannot accept business waste. Check with your local authority for further information.

Glass collectors and recyclers – some waste management companies collect flat glass in addition to container glass. Available services will differ depending upon glass quantities and your location. In addition to private providers, some local authorities provide commercial waste collection services.

The Environmental Services Association are the UK trade body for the resource and waste management industry. [ESA Members Directory](#)

The following collectors known to British Glass offer flat glass collection:

- **URM** - [Plate, Flat or Float Glass - URM \(urmgroup.co.uk\)](#)
- **May Glass Recycling** - [Glass collection | May Glass Recycling Ltd](#)
- **Enva** - [Glass we recycle \(enva.com\)](#)
- **Bottleman Recycling Services** - [Plate Glass Recycling Services \(bottleman.co.uk\)](#)

Glass supplier/manufacturer – the supplier or manufacturer of your flat glass may backhaul cullet from you when they deliver new glass. Contact your supplier or include in your tender to find out if such a scheme is available. Demolition and refurbishment projects should consider including flat glass recycling requirements in tenders and contracts.

- **Guardian Glass** offer backhauling services to customers. [Contact us | Guardian Glass](#)
- **Pilkington UK** offer cullet collection services and systems. Contact enquiries@pilkington.com
- **Saint-Gobain Building Glass** provide details here: [Cullet Return | Glass Recycling | Saint-Gobain](#)

4. What are we doing to improve flat glass recycling?

The UK flat glass sector is committed to improving flat glass recycling in the UK. We actively engage with stakeholders including national, devolved and local government, the construction and demolition industry, end of life vehicle processors, the glazing and fenestration sector, and waste management industry. We are involved in a range of initiatives which could improve flat glass recycling, including collection trials and new de-lamination technology.

If you would like to know more or get involved please contact information@britglass.co.uk