

**Pre-Intermediate 2**  
**Unit 5: Reading**  
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## Recycling

**recycle** (verb) = to get back useful materials from waste

**recycling** (noun) = the process of getting back useful materials from waste

Some waste is not dangerous. Often somebody will recycle it and do something useful with it. You can break up old cars to get the metal, or make new glass from old bottles. But some waste is toxic – it is very poisonous. In the USA, for example, factories dump – throw away – about 265 million tons of toxic waste every year. How do you dump toxic waste safely? Well, you can put it in metal containers and leave it somewhere safe, but this can be a very bad idea.

**waste** = garbage (American), rubbish (British)

waste ⇒ formal & scientific

➤ *nuclear waste*

garbage = rubbish ⇒ informal

### Point:

The word “waste” is an uncountable noun: we cannot add the plural “s” to it and the verb which follows it has to be singular.

Example:

**wrong:** Some wastes are dangerous.

**right:** Some waste is dangerous.

**dangerous** ≠ safe

**useful** ≠ harmful, useless

**useful** = helpful, handy

**useless** = without any use

**harmful** = causing damage

**break up** = break something into small parts

**metal** = a type of solid mineral substance that is usually hard and shiny and that heat and electricity can travel through, for example tin, iron and gold

**glass** = a hard, usually clear, substance used, for example, for making windows and bottles

**toxic** = poisonous

**ton** = 1000 kilograms

**dump** = throw away, get rid of

**get rid of somebody/something** = to make yourself free of somebody/something that is annoying you or that you do not want; to throw something away

You can bury toxic waste. You put it in a deep hole and cover it with soil. In the 1930s, a chemical producer buried many tons of toxic waste in metal containers. In the 1950s, a builder bought the land and built a little town there. Nobody remembered the containers of toxic waste under the ground. Then, in the 1970s, the waste started to come through the metal of the containers and polluted the ground. Trees and grass blackened and died. There was a bad smell everywhere. People had to leave their homes. The people who cleaned up the place found eighty-two different toxic chemicals in the soil.

**bury** = hide sth under the ground

**deep** ≠ shallow

**deep** = having a large distance from the top or surface to the bottom

**soil** = the top layer of the earth in which plants, trees, etc. grow

**1930s** = from the beginning of 1930 until the end of 1939

**1950s** = from the beginning of 1950 until the end of 1959

**1970s** = from the beginning of 1970 until the end of 1979

**The waste started to come through the metal of the containers.** = The waste started to leak.

**leak** = to allow liquid or gas to get in or out through a small hole

**pollute** = contaminate

**blacken** = become black

**blacken** ≠ whiten

**clean up** = clean completely

## **Love Canal**

Love Canal is a neighborhood in the city of Niagara Falls, New York, United States. It was the location of a landfill that became the site of an enormous environmental disaster in the 1970s. Decades of dumping toxic chemicals harmed the health of hundreds of residents; the area was cleaned up over the course of 21 years. A lot of money was spent for the clean-up operation.



Clean-up Operation in Love Canal



The Remains of the Leaking Containers



The Protest by a Resident of Love Canal

You can burn toxic waste, but it is more expensive than burying it, and the burning can produce dangerous gases. So some people burn their toxic waste at sea in special ships. The chemicals get into the air and the wind carries them a long way.

**expensive** = costly  $\neq$  cheap

**produce** = make

You can send your toxic waste to a poorer country and pay somebody to burn or bury it there. The USA sends toxic waste to Panama. Germany and Holland send toxic waste to the Czech Republic. Is this a good idea?

**the USA** = the United States of America

**Holland** = the Netherlands = a country in Europe

Toxic waste can be useful if you know how to recycle it. Some petrol producers bury their toxic waste in the soil. There, special bacteria in the soil eat the waste and change it into clean, safe carbon dioxide and water. In Britain, some people are growing special waste-eating bacteria. These bacteria eat toxic chemicals. There is a lot of toxic waste in the world: Are these bacteria hungry enough?

**petrol** (British) = gasoline, gas (American) = the fuel used in most of the cars

**Carbon Dioxide** =  $\text{CO}_2$   $\Rightarrow$  a safe gas

**Carbon Monoxide** =  $\text{CO}$   $\Rightarrow$  a dangerous gas

**bacterium** (singular) = bacteria (plural)

**waste-eating bacteria** = the bacteria which eat waste

## **Main Ideas:**

How to get rid of toxic waste:

You can ...

- put it in metal containers and leave it somewhere safe
- bury it → a bad idea: because it may leak and pollute the soil
- burn it → more expensive than burying it; can produce dangerous gases
- send it to a poorer country and ask somebody to bury or burn it there: the USA sends toxic waste to Panama; Germany and Holland send toxic waste to the Czech republic.
- recycle it → Some bacteria eat toxic waste and change it into safe materials

## **Full Text:**

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Toxic waste can be useful if you know how to recycle it. Some petrol producers bury their toxic waste in the soil. There, special bacteria in the soil eat the waste and change it into clean, safe carbon dioxide and water. In Britain, some people are growing special waste-eating bacteria. These bacteria eat toxic chemicals. There is a lot of toxic waste in the world: Are these bacteria hungry enough?

**Sample Summary:**

The text discusses the problem of toxic waste and how to deal with it. It mentions four ways of dumping toxic waste: leaving it in metal containers, burying it underground, burning it at sea, or sending it to other countries. It also suggests a better way of recycling toxic waste: using bacteria that can eat it and turn it into harmless substances.

**Source:**

[Pre-Intermediate 2 \(anglophone.ir\)](http://Pre-Intermediate 2 (anglophone.ir))