

# Bring your own containers when buying food and drinks

Many people want to limit packaging waste and are interested in using their own containers when buying food but aren't sure about the rules. The most common example of a **BYO** container is a reusable cup when getting a takeaway coffee.

## The law

The Food Act in Tasmania and the Food Standards Code allow for the use of BYO containers. There are a few important things of which customers and businesses need to be mindful.

### For customers

- Make sure the container you plan on using is clean.
- Ensure your container has a well-fitting lid.
- Don't use chipped or cracked containers, they may harbor harmful bacteria.
- Only use food grade containers that can be washed well in hot soapy water.
- You cannot re-use previously labelled food containers, including egg cartons.
- Note that a business is not obligated to use your container – it's a decision for the business to make.

### For businesses

- A food business is not obliged to fill a container and may have their own policy about this.
- If a customer presents a dirty container, you can choose to clean it before filling it or refuse to fill it.
- Reusing egg cartons, or other labelled food packaging, is not allowed (it causes labelling compliance problems).

### For more information

- Speak to your local Council's Environmental Health Officer.
- Ring the Public Health Hotline 1800 671 738 and ask to speak with a food safety officer.

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