



Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme

What you need to know



What is a deposit return scheme?

Deposit Return is coming to Scotland, in August 2023. It will be a key part of our future recycling system.

When you buy a drink in a single-use drinks can or bottle, you will pay a 20p deposit. You get it back when you return the bottle or can for recycling.

The scheme will be available throughout Scotland, and will boost recycling, while helping fight climate change and prevent litter.

Similar schemes are used across the world to encourage more people to recycle.

What's included?



PET
PLASTIC
BOTTLES



GLASS
BOTTLES



STEEL/
ALUMINIUM
CANS

Container sizes included: 50 ml to 3 litre

2025
90%

By 2025, the scheme will capture **90%** of all cans and bottles included in the scheme for recycling and provide a whole host of benefits to Scotland.

The benefits

Deposit return schemes operate in many countries where they help tackle climate change and reduce **litter**. Scotland is joining them, with a scheme designed to meet our unique needs, tackle our throwaway culture and help protect our environment for generations to come.

Save almost
4 million tonnes
of carbon over
25 years.

90% of scheme
bottles and cans
recycled over
and over.

Up to one third
less litter
polluting our
environment.

Nearly 160,000
tonnes of CO₂e saved
every year - that's
109,000 return flights
from Edinburgh to
New York.

34,000 fewer
plastic bottles
dropped each
day.

How it works

- Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme places the responsibility on drinks **producers** for the collection and recycling of the containers their products come in.
- **Retailers** will charge a 20p deposit on bottles and cans and will take back empty drinks containers, either over the counter or via a reverse vending machine.
- **Hospitality businesses**, like restaurants, bars, cafes and hotels, will have different obligations depending on whether they sell drinks to take away or sell drinks to be consumed on-site only.
- All return points will get a handling fee to cover costs.
- Circularity Scotland Ltd, the scheme administrator **scheme administrator**, may fulfill the obligations of retailers and producers.
- SEPA will regulate the scheme.

Key dates

May 2020

January 2021

March 2021

December 2022

January 2023

August 2023

MSPs voted for the scheme to become law

Retailers can apply for exemptions; applications open for voluntary return points

Circularity Scotland Limited were approved as the scheme administrator

Registration with Circularity Scotland Limited opens for Return Point Operators

Producers can register with SEPA

The scheme goes live for everyone

So, what should I be doing now?

Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme will start in 2023.

If you need to know what to do with your recycling, including empty bottles and cans in the meantime, visit **managingourwaste.scot** or find lots of hints and tips on our **[How To Waste Less website](#)**.

If you're a business, you can read our **[FAQ section](#)** or find dedicated resources for **[retailers](#)**, **[producers](#)** and **[hospitality businesses](#)** on our dedicated website **depositreturn.scot**



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