



HOW TO CONDUCT YOUR WASTE AUDIT:

There are a number of ways to carry out a waste audit. We suggest “keeping it simple”, and choosing a “waste sorting” approach in which students self-sort their waste into pre-labeled bins. The waste items in each bin are then tallied. At the end of the week, we hope the data helps to tell your school’s Zero Waste Week story.

WHO IS BEING AUDITED: The group and/or number of students participating in your audit is up to you. You may decide to audit the entire school or select specific grades or classes to participate. Just remember, It’s important to audit the same “group” of students during the pre-ZWW and end-ZWW audits.

WHAT ITEMS ARE BEING AUDITED: To help simplify and focus your efforts in reducing single-use plastic during ZWW, it is recommended to select ONE or TWO single use plastic items- maybe it’s plastic bottles, straws or juice pouches- that you want to reduce during ZWW. These items can become the focus of your ZWW campaign on and off campus.

WHERE TO HAVE YOUR WASTE AUDITS: Select one or more place(s) on your campus to conduct your audit such as the cafeteria(s), outside eating area(s), snack areas, playing fields, teachers’ lounge, etc. HOWEVER, it is important to audit the same place(s) during both pre-ZWW and end-ZWW.

WHEN TO CONDUCT YOUR WASTE AUDITS: To most accurately measure the success of your week-long, campus waste-reduction campaign, you will want to conduct an audit **BEFORE** ZWW begins and another one **at the END** of ZWW. The first audit should be as much of a “surprise” audit as possible so that your students cannot “prepare” for the audit.

THE AUDIT TEAM:

Decide who will do what in your team. Job descriptions below.

Monitor(s) - Monitor makes sure students are sorting their waste into the correct bins. Monitor will remove incorrectly sorted waste with picker tool and put into correct bin. Monitors wear gloves and apron or large t-shirt to keep clean.

Counter(s) - Responsible for counting the numbers of the audited waste item(s) in each bin. Counters wear gloves and aprons and goggles, if needed.

Recorder - Records data determined by Counter and then transfers raw data onto official ZWW audit card.

Cleaners - Responsible for disposing or recycling collected items (as appropriate) and cleaning up audit area.

AUDIT SUPPLIES:

Sorting bins, boxes or buckets. Classroom recycle bins & cardboard boxes work well.



Plastic liners for bins

Gloves, (aprons, oversized t-shirts, goggles, etc.) for students who will be monitoring, counting, cleaning up.

Waste picker(s) - A long handled tool to pick up the waste.

Paper, Pen , Clipboard & Paper for recording data - Final numbers can be transferred later to official ZWW audit card.

Cleaning supplies for cleaning up after the audit (hand sanitizers, paper towels, sponges, cleaning solutions, etc.)

Permission form - check to see if your school requires a signed permission form for participating students

AUDIT PREP:

- ⇒ **Gather enough bins** to collect the waste items that are being audited along with trash and recycling bins for items not being audited. The number of bins depends on how your school sorts waste and what items you are auditing.
- ⇒ **Keep the sort bins clean** by lining them with a plastic liner.
- ⇒ **Label each bin** . An easy labeling method is to find samples of the waste items you will collect and glue, tape or staple them onto a piece of cardboard or paper and attach to your bin. For example, if you are collecting single-use plastic drink bottles, make a sign or secure examples of these bottle types that are commonly used in your school to that specific bin. Do this for each bin. Make sure labels are clearly visible and easy to understand.
- ⇒ **Set these bins up in a line** so that students can easily move around the collection site and reach each bin. If you have lots of students who will participate, you may want to set up to two teams and lines or areas with collection bins.

AFTER THE COLLECTION - COUNTING & RECORDING:

- ⇒ After lunch, keep the bins that you need for the audit and correctly dispose of all other bins.
- ⇒ Count and record the items you selected to audit.
- ⇒ Clean the waste audit area, put away containers and tools, wash hands.
- ⇒ Transfer your numbers to the on-line ZWW Waste Audit Card.

THANK YOU FOR DOING THIS IMPORTANT WORK!

