



Action Report

**Improving Separation of
Carton and Packaging Waste
in an Apartment Building**

1. Description of Action

Over a two-week period, I carried out a small environmental action focused on improving how packaging waste—particularly cartons—was handled in my apartment building. The action involved observing existing waste disposal practices, speaking informally with co-tenants about separating carton and packaging waste from general waste, and encouraging simple changes such as flattening cartons before disposal.

2. Context and Motivation

In my apartment building, all waste is typically disposed of in shared bins, with packaging materials such as cartons being lumped together with food and general waste. This often results in bins filling up quickly and packaging materials becoming contaminated, making proper sorting or recovery more difficult.

This action was motivated by the understanding that packaging waste, especially cartons, takes up significant space when not flattened or separated. Improving sorting practices at the building level could reduce waste volume, improve waste handling, and potentially lower waste collection costs without requiring major infrastructure changes.

3. Participants

I led the action independently. Several co-tenants were involved through informal conversations in shared spaces such as hallways and near waste disposal areas. Participation was voluntary, and no one was required or pressured to change their disposal habits.

4. Observations and Reflections

During the two weeks, I observed that many co-tenants were not intentionally mixing packaging waste with other waste, but were simply unaware that cartons could be separated or flattened. Informal, friendly conversations helped clarify this and made the topic feel approachable rather than critical.

A noticeable change was improved sorting behavior among some co-tenants. Several people began flattening cartons before disposal, and some started placing packaging materials together instead of mixing them with food waste. As a result, the shared waste bin filled up more slowly than usual, suggesting a reduction in waste volume.

One challenge was consistency. While some co-tenants adopted the new practice quickly, others continued with existing habits, especially during busy periods. This highlighted the importance of ongoing reminders and visible guidance to sustain change.

5. Key Learning

This action demonstrated that small, low-effort changes in packaging waste handling can lead to practical benefits, such as better sorting and reduced bin volume. Clear communication and respectful engagement were more effective than instructions or rules. Documenting these changes helped connect everyday behavior with tangible outcomes, including potential cost savings for waste collection.

6. Next Steps

If this action were continued, next steps could include placing simple signage near waste bins to encourage co-tenants to separate and flatten cartons, or working with building management to introduce clearer waste categories.