

The Art of Recycling

Recycling is not new. Many civilizations have reused objects. However, recycling is more important today because there is more pollution and fewer natural



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resources. Your family might recycle cans and bottles. Some people use these recycled material to make art!

Artists use old tires, pieces of metal, and cloth. Almost anything can be recycled into art. These materials might come from yard sales or swap meets. In addition, businesses might give used materials to artists.

Recycled art often says something about our world. For example, artists in New York City made a sculpture that looked like a giant white cloud. The sculpture, called “Head in the Clouds,” was more than 40 feet long and 15 feet high! People walked into the cloud sculpture and danced to live music. The artists used more than 53,000 recycled water bottles to make the cloud. That’s the number of water bottles that are thrown into the trash every hour in New York City! The artists wanted to show

how many water bottles ended up in the garbage.

Many art projects are shown at outdoor art and music festivals. Many cities even have festivals specifically for recycled art.

Museums also exhibit recycled art. A museum in Texas allowed visitors to add to the art on display. The project was called the “Recycle Reef.” The background looked like an ocean reef, and people added to the “reef” with the recycled materials provided. They even recycled the exhibit after the show ended.

Not all recycled art is big, though. Jewelry designers often make bracelets and necklaces from used objects.

Some make beads from the paper in old books. Others make bracelets from braided strips of potato chip bags. Some knit purses from plastic grocery bags.

Have you made something using paper towel tubes or water bottles? If so, you’ve made recycled art. What else can you reuse to design something new?



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