ALDI Packaging Material and Design Guide for Business Partners

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ALDI Australia is committed to doing the right thing in every aspect of our operations. We recognise our responsibility to reduce our impact on the environment across our business and supply chain in relation to food, waste, recycling, packaging and carbon emissions. Our customers care about the impact of their purchases, and as we work towards achieving our Plastics & Packaging commitments by 2025, we aim to work closely with our business partners. This Guide aims to provide information to help make best practice decisions when it comes to packaging materials and design.

How To Read This Document

Identify your current packaging format; if it is in **RED** you cannot supply this to ALDI after 2025. Ideally, packaging should be transitioned to a material listed in **GREEN**. If you cannot use a material listed there, then look to move to materials listed in **ORANGE**, which are acceptable but not best practice.

Once you have identified your ideal material type, refer to the corresponding material-specific guide for detailed design guidance. They're there to help you make the right decisions when updating your packaging!

Click the icon to see details	**BEST PRACTICE** Widely recyclable	**AVOID USE** Lost value recyclability or limited infrastructure	**DO NOT USE** Problematic, to be phased out latest end-2025
Metals	• **Aluminium** • **Steel**		If made with other materials that exceed maximum thresholds, including paper or plastic.
Glass	• **Glass** If clear or light-tinted green, brown or amber packaging glass.		If a large surface area is covered with permanent adhesives (>70%), large plastic labels or the glass is tinted dark/opaque. Other glass that has been treated e.g. Pyrex.
Rigid plastics	• **PET, rPET** • **HDPE** • **LDPE** • **PP** If clear or natural non-coloured mono-material.	• **PET, rPET, cPET** • **HDPE** • **LDPE** • **PP** If lightly tinted or transparent. Including light opaque or opaque white.	• **PVC** • **PS/HIPS** • **EPS (EPE, EVA/PEVA, EPP)** • **PLA** • **Oxo degradable plastic, fragmentable plastics** *EPS packaging and PVC labels are subject to industry-led phase-out from 2022 and should be avoided. Or, any rigid plastic that uses carbon black pigments, is dark and opaque or uses more than one plastic in a single component.
Paper, cardboard, fibre based materials	• **Corrugated Cardboard** • **Carton board/card** • **Paper**	• **Liquid Paper Board** • **Aseptic Gable Top** If plastic polymer coatings and laminates are minimal and only on one side of the paper/board.	• **Composite cans** • **High Wet Strength Boxboard** • **Wood** • **Cork** • **OPP-lined board** Or, if coated with wax, silicone, PFAS, or plastic polymers that exceed maximum thresholds.
Soft plastics	• **Mono material: PE (including HDPE, LDPE, LLDPE)** • **PP**	• **Laminate Films** • **Composite materials** Only if within APCO soft plastic thresholds.	• **PET** • **PVDC** • **Paper** • **Aluminium** • Any other flexible plastic not explicitly mentioned in green.
Compostable materials		• **Home compostable materials** (only acceptable if certified to the Australian Standard for Home Composting - AS 5810), and clearly labelled.	• **Bioplastics (incl. PLA)** • **Industrially compostable materials** (even if certified) • **Biodegradable and degradable materials** • **Landfill degradable materials**

DOs

- Use only one material type where possible, avoiding composite plastics.
- Lightweight packaging materials where possible.
- Minimise the use of colours to increase recyclability.
- Incorporate recycled content where possible, post-consumer recycled content is preferred.
- Refer to the Material-specific Guidance for Business Partners section for specific design guidance for your preferred material type.
- Consider if packaging is 100% necessary; eliminate and reduce packaging as much as possible without compromising product.
- Use only one material type (mono-material) where possible and avoid composites, especially composite plastics.

DONTs

- Use dark colours and/or carbon black pigments.
- Use any unnecessary packaging.
- Use large or full sleeve labels that require a large amount of adhesive.
- Direct ink print, where possible.
- Claim degradability; unless certified compostable to the ABA Home Compost standard.
- Use PFAS in packaging.
- Use fragmentable plastics, including oxo-degradable, photo-degradable or enzyme mediated materials.

Material-specific Guidance for Business Partners

Please note that this guide reflects current information at time of publishing and ultimately, the recyclability of a packaging format will be determined by the Packaging Recyclability Evaluation Portal (PREP). For the most up to date information, refer to the APCO resources linked throughout this document.

How To Read This Document

If you have already chosen your material type from the Packaging Material Guide table, refer to the below considerations to understand different packaging applications that are **BEST PRACTICE** or **SHOULD BE AVOIDED** to optimise packaging recoverability.

If you aren't sure where to start, look for a packaging component that you need, e.g., bottle in the below tables and follow the design considerations for the relevant material types.

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		BEST PRACTICE Widely recyclable	AVOID USE WHERE POSSIBLE Lost value recyclability, limited infrastructure or problematic, to be phased out latest end-2025
 **Metals** Examples: Cans, drums, tins.	**Materials**	Use uncontaminated aluminium or steel and prioritise using one metal type per packaging format.	Two or more metals if they are not separable. Metal items less than 20 mm in two dimensions cannot be recovered.
	Labels	Use a paper label with minimal adhesive or utilise direct printing. Plastic labels can be used so long as they cover less than 40% of the surface area and use minimal adhesives.	Paper or plastic labels in excess, or if they are unable to be removed.
	Closures	If a cap is required, it should be the same material as the main packaging component.	Removable closures for aluminium cans (not permitted for the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS)).
 **Glass** Examples: Bottles, jars.	**Materials**	Should be clear, amber, brown or light green. Where dark-tinted glass is required, ensure the glass is transparent enough that dark print on white paper can be read through the glass.	Opaque glass that is black, dark blue, red, purple or dark green. Ceramics and heat-treated glass (e.g. Pyrex). Glass items less than 10 mm in two dimensions cannot be recovered.
	Labels	Use a paper label with minimal adhesive or utilise direct printing. Plastic labels can be used so long as they cover less than 40% of the surface area and use minimal adhesives.	Plastic/film, full sleeved labels, metallised labels or metal inks.
APCO Design Guide	**Closures**	Prioritise the use of a steel closure to increase recyclability. Aluminium capsules, caps and temper-evident rings can be used, but will have a reduced value with regards to recyclability.	Cork. Swing-top closures with ceramic. any closures that cannot be fully removed from glass; only use tamper-evident rings and RFID tags where required.

PET, rPET, cPET

Examples:
Bottles, punnets, clamshells, trays, containers, jars.

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	BEST PRACTICE	AVOID USE WHERE POSSIBLE
Materials	Use a monolayer PET with clear unpigmented resin (or transparent light blue). Maximise use of recycled content where technically feasible.	Non-PET barriers or coatings (such as EVOH or Nylon based) or degradability additives. Carbon black pigments and avoid opaque colours, including white PET.
Size	Avoid lightweight plastics by utilising the PREP Tool where required to confirm recyclability. Exact dimensions will vary widely as recyclability is measured by weight distribution across the packaging item.	Less than 50 mm in three dimensions or greater than 231mm in two dimensions.
Closures	PET, HDPE or PP is best practice. Ensure it is clear, unpigmented resin and doesn't have a liner.	Dark coloured caps, PVC, metal or metal foils.
Labels	Use an OPP or PET label covering less than 40% of surface area. If required, use laser markings. Use a non-washable, non-toxic ink and ensure any adhesives are washable, residue-free and non-toxic. Try to keep adhesive coverage to a minimum (only as much as required).	PS, PVC or full sleeve labels. highly coloured, bleeding inks metallic inks and avoid direct printing as it reduces recycling value. Non-water soluble/ dispersible adhesives.

Rigid HDPE & LDPE

Examples: Milk bottles, crates, trays, caps, containers, health and beauty bottles, squeezable bottles.

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Materials	If using barrier coatings, ensure made from PE or EVOH. Maximise use of recycled content where technically feasible.	Mineral fillers that change the polymer density, contain degradable additives, or any barriers or coatings other than PE or EVOH. Less than 50 mm in three dimensions or greater than 231mm in two dimensions.
Size	Avoid lightweight plastics by utilising the PREP Tool where required to confirm recyclability. Exact dimensions will vary widely as recyclability is measured by weight distribution across the packaging item.	Less than 50 mm in three dimensions or greater than 231mm in two dimensions.
Colours	Unpigmented is best practice, otherwise white and light pigmented opaque colours can be used but lowers the value of recyclate.	Transparent tinted HDPE contaminates recycled HDPE so should only be used where required. Carbon black and dark pigments.
Closures	Clear PE plastic is best practice, avoid use of a liner.	Dark caps of any material. PVC, Nylon and. Metal parts of foils, wadding, padding, ties and cables.
Labels	Ensure the label is covering less than 40% of packaging surface area. For best practice, labels should be polyolefin plastic.	Paper, PVC, PS, metalised, PLA and other degradable additive labels cause contamination.
Inks	When using inks, ensure they are non-washable and non-toxic. If direct printing, use laser markings and non-toxic inks. Try to minimise direct printing where possible.	Toxic, hazardous, bleeding, or dark coloured inks. Direct printing reducing recycling value.
Adhesives	When using adhesives, ensure there is minimal adhesive coverage, and that it is non-toxic and washable.	Large areas of glue and/or non-water soluble/dispersal adhesives.

Soft plastics (polyolefin-based flexible packaging)

PE, LDPE, HDPE

Examples LDPE: Packaging films and wrap, bread bags, fruit and vegetable bags.

Examples HDPE: freezer bags, plastic packaging for food kept at low temperatures.

PP

Examples: Chocolate wrappers.

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	BEST PRACTICE	AVOID USE WHERE POSSIBLE
Materials	Mono-PE (Including HDPE and LDPE) and mono-PP, preferably. If lamination is required for composite films, use only one polymer type, e.g., PE with PE, or PP with PP. Ensure the below thresholds are met to meet recyclability guidelines. • > 80% PE (Including HDPE & LDPE), or • > 80% PP If using barrier layers or coatings ensure the maximum total packaging structure weight for the below materials does not exceed 5% for each, and 20% in total: AlOx, SiOx, EVOH, PVOH, Acrylic. Use clear, natural or pale colours. Maximise use of recycled content where technically feasible.	Any material other than PE or PP. No PET, PA, PVC or PVdC layers should be present, as well as no biodegradable or compostable materials and no paper or aluminum foil. PVC, PS and Bioplastics (excluding bio-based PE/PP) are not accepted at any level, even as a barrier. Carbon black pigments or dark colours.
Labels	Ensure same material as main material is used - mono-PE or mono-PP. Use polyurethane, acrylic or natural rubber latex adhesives. Non-PE or non-PP based tie-layers are permitted to a maximum of 5% of total packaging weight.	Hard to remove labels, paper labels, or any label covering over 30% of the packaging surface area and not the same material as main component. Any non-PE or non-PP foamed polymer labels.
Inks	Use lighter colours and utilise surface or lamination printing.	Darker ink colours shouldn't be used and if PVC binders are present, then ink cannot be used.
Adhesives	Keep usage to a minimum. Includes; thermal stabilisers, UV stabilisers, nucleating agents, mineral and polymer cavitating agents, antistatic agents, impact modifiers, chemical blowing agents and tackifiers.	Substances of very high concern, oxo-degradability additives, foamed thermoplastic non-polyolefin elastomers.

	BEST PRACTICE	AVOID USE WHERE POSSIBLE
Rigid PP Examples: bottles, tubs, medicinal bottles, plant pots. APCO Design Guide		
Materials	Prioritise using a single monomer PP and no coatings. Ensure the colours are unpigmented and clear.	Mineral fillers that change the polymer density, contain degradable additives, or any barriers or coatings other than PP or EVOH. Carbon black and dark pigment colours affect recyclability.
Size	To avoid lightweight plastics, utilise the PREP Tool where required to confirm recyclability. Exact dimensions will vary widely as recyclability is measured by weight distribution across the packaging item.	Less than 50 mm in three dimensions or greater than 231mm in two dimensions.
Closures	If a closure is required, ensure it is clear, unpigmented PP resin without a liner.	PVC, nylon, silicon, metal parts/foils or any dark coloured materials.
Labels	Where a label is required, use PP and where possible in a sleeve format. Aim for <40% surface area coverage. When using inks, ensure they are non-washable and non-toxic. Where adhesives are required, minimise the area coverage and ensure they are non-toxic, washable.	Paper, PVC, PS, metalised, PLA and other degradable additive labels cause contamination. toxic, hazardous, bleeding, or dark coloured inks. Print areas over 30%. Large areas of glue and non-water soluble/dispersal adhesives.
Direct Print	If required, use laser markings (no direct printing) or non-toxic inks.	Direct printing reduces recycling value.
Fibre based packaging **Paper or cardboard packaging;** Examples: Cereal and food boxes, cosmetic and body care boxes. **Liquid Paper Board or Aseptic Gable Top Cartons;** Examples: juice boxes, milk and dairy containers. APCO Design Guide		
Materials	Aim to use 100% post-consumer recycled fibre. If 100% recycled fibre is not possible, specify a mix of post-consumer, post-industrial or sustainably harvested fibre. Any virgin wood-based fibre should be either FSC or PEFC certified. Note: this is an ALDI requirement for core range products if the packaging is less than 70% recycled content.	If filler is required, it should not contain any chemicals with tendencies to accumulate in fibers or process waters. Any additives greater than 15% by weight (cumulative).
Size	To avoid heavyweight paper, utilise the PREP Tool where required to confirm recyclability. Exact dimensions will vary widely as recyclability is measured by weight distribution across the packaging item.	Less than 50 mm in three dimensions.
Inks & Coatings	Where ink is required, minimise ink coverage and use vegetable-based inks. PE (HDPE, LDPE, LLDPE), PP (PP, OPP, BOPP) or PET one-sided coatings and laminates can be used if less than 5% (15% cumulatively). If suitable, peelable layers consumers can separate from the paper/board.	PE, PP, PET >5%, PS and EVOH at any % as well as bioplastic coatings, waxes and silicone. Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) should not be used. Dark inks should be minimised. Avoid any inks containing components of the EuPIA exclusion list. Metalisation and/or metalic foil block printing not accepted at any % of the surface area.
Adhesives & Waxes	Try to use inter-locking tabs instead of adhesives where possible.	Pressure sensitive or cold-seal adhesives. Water-soluble adhesives. Any wet-strength additives.
Labels	Use paper labels.	Unnecessary decorations using non-paper formats.
Closures	Where separate closures are required, separable caps may be used. Use monomaterial plastic caps for best recyclability outcome. The PREP tool must be used for final recyclability guidance.	

Compostables

(Bagasse, Corn Starch, etc.)

Examples: Fruit and vegetable trays, pre-packaged ready meal trays.

APCO Considerations

	BEST PRACTICE	AVOID USE WHERE POSSIBLE
Certification	Australian Home Compostable certification - AS 5810.	
Application	Compostable packaging should only be used where there is likely to be residual food left on the packaging which would negatively impact recyclability, or where it aids in the recovery of food waste.	No compostable claim can be made with regards to ALDI policy if the packaging is, not certified, certified to Australian industrial compostable standards, or has an international certification.
Composition		Bioplastics (bio-based or biodegradable including PLA), degradable and fragmentable materials, even where certified. PFAS additives cannot be certified in line with the ABA standards.

Glossary

EPS	Expanded polystyrene
HDPE	High-density polyethylene
HIPS	High impact polystyrene
LDPE	Low-density polyethylene
OPP	Oriented polypropylene
PE	Polyethylene
PET (rPET, cPET)	Polyethylene terephthalate. rPET: recycled PET, cPET: crystallisable PET.
PLA	Polylactide (derived from sugarcane or corn)
Polymeric Foams (EPE, EVA/ PEVA, EPP)	EPE: Expanded polyethylene, EVA: Ethylene-vinyl acetate, PEVA: Polyethylene-vinyl acetate, EPP: Expanded Polypropylene.
PP	Polypropylene
PS	Polystyrene
PVC	Polyvinyl chloride
PVDC	Polyvinylidene chloride

Helpful Resources

To support our business partners in the implementation of the ALDI Plastics and Packaging Commitments, some helpful resources are provided below:

- **ALDI Plastics & Packaging Commitments:** Plastics & Packaging - ALDI Australia
- **ALDI South Group - International Recyclability Guideline:** https://asg-portal.assima.net/Library/Enduser/Item/Default.aspx?LocalizedItemId=103661&RootType=2
- **ALDI Master Artwork Guidelines:** https://corporate.aldi.com.au/en/suppliers/supplier-information/
- **ALDI Suppliers Guide to Sustainable Packaging:** https://corporate.aldi.com.au/en/suppliers/supplier-information/
- **ALDI Sustainable Forestry Policy:** https://corporate.aldi.com.au/en/suppliers/supplier-information/
- **APCO Membership Options:** https://apco.org.au/about-membership
- **Australian Bioplastic Association (ABA) Certifications:** https://bioplastics.org.au/certification/
- **PREP Tool:** https://prep.org.au/main/content/home
- **EuPIA Exclusion Policy:** https://www.eupia.org/our-commitment/eupia-exclusion-policy-for-printing-inks-and-related-products/

APCO has an extensive library of materials developed to support its members implement sustainable packaging decisions. Some examples of helpful resources are provided below:

- Sustainable Packaging Guidelines (SPGs)
- Quickstart Guides: These guides cover a range of packaging material types, including rigid and flexible plastic, composite, compostable, and fibre-based.
- Considerations for Compostable Packaging
- Recycled Content Guide