

Choose to Reuse

Have a question about Choose to Reuse? Read on.

Logistics

When is Choose to Reuse held?

The Choose to Reuse events are held on the third Thursday of the month. Drop-off for Reuse begins at 8:00 am in the Stata Center's big white lobby at the corner of Main and Vassar Streets. Taking stuff starts at 11:00 and ends at 1:00; drop offs continue until 1:00.

Does it cost anything to attend a Choose to Reuse event?

No, there is no admission charge and you won't have to pay for items at the event. Everything is free. The goal is to extend the life of good products by buying less stuff. This way we're using less energy by making fewer products and generating less waste overall.

Do I have to bring something to swap in order to participate?

You don't have to bring in anything to swap. In other words, you don't have to give to get.

How did Choose to Reuse begin at MIT?

Reuse events were held by a student group called Freemeet until the organizers graduated. The Working Group Recycling Committee (WGR now known as "Green") held events on Earth Day and then collaborated with UA Sustainability and later with Sustainability@MIT for America Recycles week where the name Choose to Reuse was born. The event began monthly in November 2011. The current Choose to Reuse events are co-sponsored by the Department of Facilities, Sustainability@MIT, and Green and will be held monthly except for July and August.

Is there always a feature of the month?

Not always. We collaborate with various groups on campus and work with them to promote their initiatives such as the Spouses and Partners' Children/Toddler Clothing Swap.

What if no one takes my item?

If no one takes the item I donated, do I have to take it back?

No, you don't have to take back your item. Everything leftover is donated to charity through MIT's Recycling Program. The charity sells the items to the general public to fund its efforts, so everything should be good enough that someone would spend money on it.

What's acceptable?

What kinds of things do people bring?

There have been all kinds of items such as clothes, kitchen stuff, books, electronics and sports equipment. All items should be clean and not broken. If you're not sure what to bring to the event, consider this: if you wouldn't buy it, then don't bring it.

I have something that needs a minor repair. Can I bring that?

It's best not to bring things that need repair, but if it's a minor repair that can be made easily, it's probably okay.

What about an old computer? Can I bring that?

MIT community members often look for parts from computers, but computers that are old may not be useful. You can recycle Institute purchased computers free from the Facilities Recycling Program. Contact recycling@mit.edu for more information.

Are there any restrictions on what to bring?

If it's too heavy for you to carry, then it will be too heavy for someone to take. We request that items weigh 20 lbs. or less so they can be carried out easily.

Can I bring things from home?

Sure. Lots of people bring usable items from home. However, because the Recycling Program has to pay for the removal of materials from campus, please don't bring unusable electronic items from home, i.e., old televisions, broken computers, etc.

What if I need help bringing a heavy box from my car?

We have volunteers who can help carry items in from your car. Remember though that donated items should be light enough that they can be easily carried by one person.

What about food items?

Unopened food items are acceptable. However, opened packages are not appropriate.

How do I sign up to help?

Do volunteers have to stay for the entire time?

Most of our volunteers stay for just one hour. Volunteers get first choice of items donated.

What tasks do volunteers perform?

The tasks include greeting people as they drop off items; sorting items and placing them on the appropriate table. At the end of the event, the tables get cleared and leftover items are bagged for pick up by the Facilities Recycling Program.

Have another question or need more information about recycling on campus?

Send other questions to staffrecycles@mit.edu. Or, check out the Facilities website at: <http://web.mit.edu/facilities/environmental/recycling.html>