

# Zero Waste Events Guidelines Checklist

This checklist is curated for small- to medium-sized events. We recognize that not every action included will always be applicable or possible. **Aim to check off as many items as you can!** For large events, and for more information, refer to [UBC Green Your Events Guide](#).

## Waste Management

Ensure that waste sorting stations and bins are properly labelled with sorting signage and are accessible to attendees. See our online [Zero Waste Events Guide](#) for how to order waste sorting bins.

At the event, place bins in this order, from left to right: food scraps, recyclable containers, paper, garbage.

Obtain signage for sorting waste [HERE](#). Place these images on bins.

**COVID-19 consideration: Recruit volunteers to help direct participants how to sort their waste at multi-bin stations. One volunteer per sorting station is recommended.**

➔ Contact [zerowaste.events@ubc.ca](mailto:zerowaste.events@ubc.ca) for any other inquiries such as event waste reduction, bin ordering and placement and volunteer recruitment strategies.

## Transportation

Choose a site for the event that is accessible via public transit, bike, or walking.

Save energy and resources: Choose a location that appropriately fits the size of your event. Leverage natural light where possible.

Consider holding the event virtually or in hybrid form to accommodate those unable to attend in person.



UBC sustainability



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Campus + Community Planning



# Food and Beverage




## Foodware Materials

Serve food on reusable dishware.

Serve drinks in glasses, mugs or reusable bottles.

→ **COVID-19 consideration:**  
**Reusable dishware and mugs are permitted but must be separately distributed to participants. Staff must wash their hands immediately after coming in contact with any used dishware items. Participants should only use the dishware they received when first served.**

Avoid Single-use items. However, if necessary, plates, cutlery, and straws should be certified compostable materials eg. bamboo, unlined paper, etc.

Cups should be fully recyclable: Should display , the most accepted plastics will have a 1, 2 or 5 label and be cleaned or rinsed before being placed in recycling.

→ “Biodegradable” plastic is not compatible with UBC’s composting facility. Items that fall under this category are not permitted in food scraps bins, and their purchase should be avoided.

## Procurement

Ask your caterer to provide condiments, food and drink items in bulk rather than single packaging. Food products may need to be separately packaged to minimize contact.

Purchase the minimum amount of food, beverages and event products needed to minimize leftovers/waste.

Secure a guest quantity before ordering food and beverage for the event.

*Refer to [UBC Sustainable Purchasing Guide](#) for additional sustainable catering suggestions*

Encourage attendees to bring their own reusable water bottles to events. Water drinking fountains may be closed, confirm a water source at the venue prior to the event.

Plan alternatives for safely distributing any leftover food, such as allowing staff or students to take home leftover food from meetings and events before composting it.



# Communications

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Strive to be a paperless event.

Promote the event digitally and minimize printed advertisements.

Share event agendas or program materials online.

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→ *If printing is unavoidable, pages should be printed double-sided, on FSC certified paper with at least 30% post-consumer recycled content. Read more guidance for sustainable printing [HERE](#).*

Communicate sustainability goals, practices and achievements to co-organizers and attendees before, during, and after the event.

Let us know how you did! After the event, debrief your event's successes and opportunities for improvement.

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# Giveaways and Prizes



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Avoid single-use decorations and giveaways. Instead consider:

Live native plants as centerpieces and event decoration which you give away at the end of the event. Online giveaways such as e-gift cards.

The gift of an experience, such as free passes to a facility, event or other activity.

Gifts, "swag" and prizes that are durable, minimally packaged, produced or purchased locally and made from recyclable materials.

# Sanitation and Safety



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**If masks are required at the venue, consider distributing reusable rather than single-use masks to attendees, and advise that attendees save the masks they were given, or bring their own reusable mask.**

**Consider sanitation stations that provide large, refillable hand sanitizers for attendees to use.**

Thank you for planning a zero waste event! Have any other questions regarding zero waste event planning at UBC? please contact [zerowaste.events@ubc.ca](mailto:zerowaste.events@ubc.ca).