



The Three Rs

“Recycle” = reprocessing an item into a new raw material for use in a new product.

“Reuse” = cleaning or repairing an item for use again for the same purpose or a different purpose.

“Reduce” = to prevent and eliminate as much resource use as possible.

Source: [Choose to Reuse](#), N & D Goldberg, 1995.

Reducing and reusing items are preferable to recycling in most cases, because recycling requires additional energy and natural resources. Here are car tire examples of reducing, reusing, and recycling:

Reducing use of car tires can be accomplished by choosing to ride a bike instead, or maintaining your car’s tires to extend their lives by checking tire pressure regularly and rotating them, so they do not have to be replaced as often.

Tires can have additional lives through primary re-use and secondary re-use. The best example of primary re-use is having it re-treaded in lieu of buying a new tire. For secondary re-uses, your worn tire can become an artificial reef in a local pond, providing habitat to its fish populations. Did you have a tire swing when you were growing up? Some people use them to contain raised flower beds.

Recycling tires involves collection at a central point, sometimes shipping to a manufacturer, and re-processing them for use in a new product. For example, tires may be washed and ground up or shredded to become part of a new road surface medium.

Adapted from [Choose to Reuse](#) by Nikki and David Goldberg, 1995.