



Junk Mail



Nationwide, we each get an estimated 40 or more pounds of junk mail each year. It takes more than 100 million trees each year to produce that amount of junk mail. Junk mail can be recycled but more than 4 million tons of it are thrown in the garbage each year instead of being recycled. Right now only about one out of five pieces is recycled.

Junk mail is advertising of one sort or another, such as credit card offers, catalogues and flyers, that arrives in your mailbox along with the mail you really want or need. It's impossible to eliminate all of it, but you can substantially reduce the amount of junk mail you receive.

Reduction Tips:

While recycling is a better option than throwing out junk mail, reducing unwanted mail is the best option.

Control your exposure

The most important thing you can do to keep your name off junk mail lists is to control your exposure. Think about how often you give out your contact information on product warranties, professional associations, publication subscriptions, contest sweepstakes, writing checks or shopping online. Remember to consistently add a privacy statement to anything you put your name on asking not to be added to their mailing list.



Register with the Direct Marketing Association

The Direct Marketing Association (DMA) is a national trade association for companies that send direct mail. Register at their website DMAchoice.org to remove your name from catalogs, magazines and other mail offers.

For each of these categories, you can choose whether or not you want to receive mail from companies one at a time. Or, if you prefer, you can choose to stop receiving mail for all companies you haven't purchased from or donated to within an entire category. Any choices you make will be effective for five years from the date you make them.

In order to be a member of this organization, businesses must agree to honor the mail preference requests submitted. However, this only applies to businesses that you have not done business with already. If you have previously ordered from a catalog or shopped at a retail location, they may continue to mail offers to you. To reduce this kind of mail, you need to contact those companies directly and ask to have your name removed from their list.

Credit offers

The nation's major consumer credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian, Innovis and TransUnion) offer a website and a toll-free number to remove your name from pre-approved credit card offers. You will need your social security number, name, address and phone number to make the request.

Online: www.optoutprescreen.com

Phone: 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688)

Phone Books

To remove your name from lists to receive phone books, visit www.yellowpagesoptout.com

Additional ways to reduce unwanted mail

By registering with the DMA and the credit bureaus you will see a significant reduction in junk mail in about 3 months.

Smartphone Applications

Smartphone users can download apps to be taken off solicitor's mailing lists. Apps, such as PaperKarma, enables users to simply snap a picture of an unwanted piece of junk mail and press "send" to become unsubscribed from the mailing list that generated it. For other app options, search app stores for "stop junk mail."

Recycle your junk mail

Even by following all these tips, you may still receive some junk mail. Remember to recycle it! If you are concerned about protecting your privacy, shred your mail prior to recycling it. Place shredded paper in a closed paper bag, label it "shredded paper" and put it out with the rest of your curbside recycling.
