

Attitudes Towards Drinks Packaging - UK - 2023

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The above prices are correct at the time of publication, but are subject to change due to currency fluctuations.

This report looks at the following areas:

- Attributes that consumers see as most important for drinks packaging.
- Factors deemed by consumers as most important for drinks packaging to be considered 'sustainable'.
- Consumers' views of, and likely reactions to, deposit return schemes.
- Attitudes towards plastic and towards products and services intended to reduce single-use plastic use, including in-store refills and reusable drinks bottles.
- Packaging-related trends in soft and alcoholic drinks launches.

Tints or visual imperfections in bottles made from recycled glass or plastic can, for some drinks, be leveraged as a positive to tangibly showcase their environmental commitments. Sustainable attributes are held to make less attractive drink packaging more appealing by 33% of adults, rising to 47% among 18-34s.

Consumers' tighter finances will prompt them to deprioritise sustainability in the short term. However, Mintel anticipates that this focus will rebound once incomes improve. Drinks companies must therefore continue in their efforts to improve the sustainability of their operations. This will ensure that, once the consumer spotlight turns back to sustainability, their environmental commitments will come across as genuine.

Some 59% of buyers expect that they would change their packaged drinks buying behaviours if a deposit return scheme (DRS) was introduced, including 25% who would expect to cut down on volumes and 20% expecting to switch to cheaper brands such as own-label. These expectations suggest a lack of understanding of how the scheme will work, signalling a need for brands to explain this to consumers ahead of implementation, to avoid shoppers reassessing their drinks choices.



"A stronger on-pack emphasis on recycled content in drinks packaging is warranted, given government targets and with this attribute widely seen by consumers as denoting sustainability."

– Alice Baker, Senior Food & Drink Analyst

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Sustainability holds top position as an important attribute for drinks packaging in the minds of consumers, on 46%, neck and neck with resealability. Calling out recycled packaging content prominently will help brands to win consumer goodwill in this key area and drive purchase, as the use of recycled materials is the joint top factor for sustainable drinks packaging, 45% of adults deeming it important.



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