



DONATION GUIDE

HOW TO DONATE

1. The Idea Store accepts donations of one grocery bag or less during our donation hours of 12-5 Wednesday-Friday and 10-4 Saturday. For larger donations, please book an appointment at <https://www.the-idea-store.org/book-online> .
2. Pack your donation in a container that you are ready to part with. We cannot empty and return containers. If you can, place your donation in the trunk of your car. If you have other items in your trunk, make sure to mark your donation clearly. We cannot accept donations of more than three copy paper-sized boxes per appointment. If you have a larger donation, please make multiple appointments. If you have a very large donation (a carload or more), please call us at (217) 352-7878 or email donations@the-idea-store.org and we will help you schedule it.
3. Please make sure that your donations are clean.
4. Drive to the west side of the mall and park near the double blue doors and pop your trunk. Do not leave your vehicle. Give us a call at (217) 352-7878 and a staff member will come out to help you. We cannot accept donations left at our back doors or brought to the front of the store. Any dumped items will go directly to the landfill.
5. We review the contents of all donations before accepting them. This process goes very quickly if you use bags, containers, or clips to organize your donation by category!
6. We are a tiny nonprofit with space and staff constraints, so sometimes we may need to ask you to hold your donation until we have room to accept it. We appreciate your patience!

If you're unsure about an item, please ask the following questions:

- Is it clean? Is it smelly or moldy, or has it been stored outside?
- Is it safe? Does it contain toxic materials (e.g., mercury thermometers) or have sharp edges?
- Would it be more appropriate for another thrift or reuse outlet (e.g., clothing, furniture, building materials)?
- Is it a personal care or used medical item?
- Is it culturally or racially insensitive?

If you answered "yes" to any of the questions above, please don't donate your item to the store! We can offer ideas for other outlets for donation or disposal on request. If you're still not sure, please email the store at donations@the-idea-store.org.



DONATION GUIDE

WHAT TO DONATE

Arts & Crafts

- Art paints (no house paint or spray paint)
- Paintbrushes
- Kids' craft items (pompoms, foam, googly eyes)
- Pens, pencils, markers, pastels
- Canvases, sketchbooks, paper pads
- Clay, sculpture tools
- Scrapbooking materials, rubber stamps
- Photos, slides, negatives
- Picture frames (no loose glass) and framing hardware
- Glue guns and sticks
- Easels, drawing boards
- Mat, poster, sign board, foamcore, pre-cut mats
- Posters and prints

Fabric & Yarn

- Fabric, ¼ yard pieces or larger
- Yarn
- Needlework, knitting, sewing, quilting tools and notions
- Working sewing machines
- Buttons
- Elastic, Velcro, hem tape
- Needlework kits
- Sewing patterns, uncut
- Knitting and needlework patterns (no photocopies)
- Working sewing machines with power cord only) and parts
- Leather pieces
- Ribbon, trim, rickrack, bias tape

Metal

- Keys, locks, keychains
- Small machinery parts, gears
- Sheet metal pieces
- Unused foil trays

Paper Goods

- Stationery, envelopes, greeting cards
- Postcards, postage stamps
- Ephemera
- Maps
- Gift wrap and bags
- Office paper, unused
- Construction and art paper

Wood

- Boxes, blocks, dowels, golf tees
- Short (less than 3'), nail-free scrap
- Balsa and basswood, craft shapes, beads
- Driftwood

Home Improvement

- Hardware
- Tile (3" square and smaller)
- Loose architectural samples (all types) and sample books (wallpaper and fabric only)
- Tools
- Toolboxes and storage containers
- Knobs, finials, hooks

Electronics & Media

- CDs and DVDs
- New cassette tapes
- Vinyl records
- Floppy disks
- Computer parts and keyboards (no monitors or whole computers)
- Cords, cables, and working chargers
- Analog equipment: record players, typewriters, phones, etc.
- Cameras and photography equipment



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School & Office

- Office supplies (file folders, organizers, staplers)
- School supplies (crayons, notebooks, scissors, folders)
- Lab glass and supplies, magnifiers
- Rubber bands, paper clips, staples, binder clips
- Labels and stickers
- Lanyards and name tags
- Report covers, page protectors
- Sticky notes, notepads
- Tape, glue
- Packing materials (no peanuts)
- Classroom materials and décor (flashcards, bulletin board edgings, manipulatives)
- Retired swag (no T-shirts)

Jewelry & Gifts

- Jewelry and jewelry parts, beads
- Jewelry making tools and supplies
- Vintage and unique items

Toys & Games

- Games and game parts
- Small toys
- Puzzles, complete or incomplete
- Dolls, doll clothes and parts
- Tennis, golf, and other small balls
- Mardi Gras beads and leis

Books & Magazines

- Art, craft, science, and nature books and magazines
- Atlases
- Vintage picture books
- Vintage magazines
- National Geographics (pre-1980)
- Comic books

Floral & Natural

- Artificial flowers and greenery
- Floral tape, foam, wire
- Feathers
- Sap-free pine cones
- Seashells, other ocean artifacts
- Rocks and gems

Containers

- Baskets, tins, film canisters and vials
- Tins
- Small boxes (jewelry, gift, phone boxes)
- Small vases and decorative containers

Other Items

- Spools and cones
- Cardboard tubes – NO TP TUBES
- Rubber stoppers
- Award medals, ribbons, trophies

Items for Store Use

- Scotch and packing tape
- Wrapped paper towels
- White printer paper and cardstock
- Natural cleaning supplies (no bleach please!)
- Monetary donations



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WHY TO DONATE

The Idea Store is a nonprofit organization that fosters creativity, environmental stewardship, education, and community through reuse. Your donations keep literally tons of materials out of the waste stream each year and place them into the hands of families, artists, teachers, students, and community members. Plus, your donation is tax-deductible.

WHAT NOT TO DONATE

- Clothing or clothing scraps
- Furniture or appliances
- House paint
- Stuffed toys or any toys larger than 2x2"
- Used cassette tapes or any VHS tapes
- Aerosols (spray paint, spray adhesive, etc.)
- Household recyclables (cans, bottles, junk mail, etc.)
- Medication bottles
- Computers, monitors, or printers

THANK YOU!!!

125 Lincoln Square | Urbana, IL | (217) 352-7878
the-idea-store.org