

Sustainable Swag Guidelines

A guide to cheaper, more sustainable, and longer-lasting “swag” merchandise.



Consider Sustainability

At events, participants often expect to receive some kind of giveaways. Unfortunately, these giveaways usually end up in the landfill. If it is not feasible to go swag-free, you can use swag as an opportunity to support Stanford’s goal to become a zero-waste campus by 2030. Follow these “Sustainable Swag” guidelines to help your club support university goals, save money, and make longer-lasting, high-quality products.

Do You Need It?

What types of swag does your campus organization currently offer? Stickers? Pens? T-Shirts? Be mindful and rethink if you need to offer swag. If you must provide giveaways, stick to one to two items a year that you can bulk order. That way, you’ll be able to purchase more durable, high quality items that are less likely to be thrown away. Reduce your swag to prioritize sustainability!

Questions to Ask Before Ordering

- How can I make longer-lasting products? (think: quality > quantity)
- Will people actually use this?
- Would I benefit from having this in college?
- Are there enough of these on campus?
- How much of this will end up in the landfill?
- Where does it come from, and how is it made?
- Can it be recycled?
- Is it compostable?

Sustainable Examples if You Must Offer Swag

- Metal straws
- USB drives
- Reusable silverware
- Reusable bottles and mugs
- Notebooks/notepads from recycled paper
- Reusable shopping bags
- Recycled lanyards
- Bamboo products
- Recycled lunch box



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CARDINAL GREEN EVENT PROGRAM

<https://sustainable.stanford.edu/green-events>