Should I put my recyclables in a bag?
It depends on the bag type! You should never place recyclables in a plastic bag. The thin plastic gets caught in the gears and causes machines to break. But you can put your recyclables in a paper bag.

Should I wash out containers before recycling them?
If there is food or residue, just give it a quick swish in your sink to remove any debris. Food debris can contaminate an entire load of recyclables. Pizza boxes can be recycled if they don't have grease residue – but we all know they usually do. If that's the case, it's better to toss it in the trash.

What do the numbers mean on plastic containers?
The number is a resin identification code, used to help recycling plants sort materials. Recyclable plastics are labeled with numbers 1-7 inside the recycling symbol to tell workers what kind of plastic it is, and how it should be processed. Generally, plastics 1, 2, 5 & 6 can be placed in your recycling bin.

Should I remove lids from bottles?
If your locality recycles glass, you should remove the lid from the glass container. If you're recycling plastic bottles the best method is to crush the plastic bottle to remove the air and secure the lid on the bottle. This allows the recycler to haul more materials as well as lessens the chance of a bottle cap shooting off during the recycling process.

Are plastic bags recyclable?
No, if you're placing them with your local recycling. If you're unable to reuse the plastic bag for other purposes that will ultimately end up in the garbage, consider dropping off your plastic bags at a Lowe's collection center for recycling. Plastic bags can be recycled into other materials (rugs, decking, etc.) as long as they're recycled with other plastic bags.

Can I recycle paper/cardboard that has been soaked by water?
No. If paper or cardboard gets wet (or covered in pizza grease), it is no longer a viable product for recycling. If you have a recycling bin with a lid at home, make sure you close the lid.

Can I recycle batteries?
Depends on the type of battery. Rechargeable batteries (those found in your Kobalt cordless drill, for example) can be recycled at certain retailers, including Lowe's. Simply follow the instructions at the Recycling Center (usually found near the front of a Lowe's store) for proper rechargeable battery recycling. Alkaline batteries, those most often found in children's toys, electronics, and flashlights are unrecyclable; since they are no longer made of hard metals your best option is to simply put them in the trash.

What should I never put in my recycling bin?
You should always check with your municipality for what is accepted, but lightbulbs, Styrofoam, hangers (both metal and plastic), and electronics are usually not accepted. Hangers can be returned to a dry cleaner or donated to a thrift store, CFL lightbulbs can be recycled at a Lowe's recycling center, and Styrofoam should be placed in the trash.
Proper recycling may seem overwhelming at first, but remember: knowledge is power! Check with your local waste hauler by visiting your town, city, or county website and find out exactly what can (or can't) be recycled.
Keep in mind Lowe's stores offer a recycling center (usually near the entrance) that accepts plastic bags, CFL bulbs, rechargeable batteries, and cellphones. Lowe's also accepts plastic planter pots and cases in the garden center for recycling. Simply bring your items in, follow instructions at the recycling center, or garden center, and Lowe's will take care of the rest.