

# Scotland's Got The Bottle

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Have  
You  
Got  
The  
Bottle?

Scotland has become the first nation in the UK to commit to a deposit return system for bottles and cans. Such systems are already working well in other countries including Canada, Estonia, Germany and Norway. The Scottish Government is now working on the detailed implementation of the system. Here are a few facts about what to expect when the system is introduced:

## What is a deposit return system?

Deposit return systems are used across the world as a way of encouraging more people to recycle drinks containers, such as bottles and cans. They work by charging anyone who buys a drink a small deposit for the bottle or can that it comes in. People get their money back when they return the bottle or can to a collection point to be recycled. Returns can be handed back manually over a counter or via an automated machine called a reverse vending machine (RVM).

## Which drinks will be included in the system?

All drinks (both soft and alcoholic) that come in PET plastic, aluminium or steel cans and glass bottles. Containers of these types, sized from 50ml to three litres, inclusive, will be part of the system.



## Which drinks won't be included in the system?

Drinks sold in pouches, cartons, HDPE (the plastic that most milk comes in) will not be included in the system initially. It's likely they will be introduced at a later date. Measures to encourage the use of re-usable cups will be introduced separately.

## How much will the deposit be?

The deposit will be 20p. A 20p deposit is easy to remember and will provide a good incentive to people to return their empty drinks bottles and cans.

## When will the system start?

The Scottish Government plans to introduce final legislation in 2019. Once this is passed by the Scottish Parliament, there will then be a minimum 12-month implementation period before the system is operational. We expect this to be early 2021.

## Where can I return my empties?

All retailers that sell drinks will be required to accept returns. This will ensure that, wherever you live, you'll be able to access a local return point, which will make it easy for people to return their empty containers. Online retailers will also be required to take back empties when making deliveries.

## Which retailers will be included in the scheme?

Consumers will be able to return their empty drinks containers to any retailer or hospitality business that sells drinks in single-use containers to take away. Online retailers will also be included in the scheme. Businesses that sell drinks to be opened and consumed on-site, such as pubs and restaurants, will not have to charge the deposit to the public and will only be required to return the containers they sell on their own premises.

## What are the benefits for Scotland?

The new system will:

- reduce litter and increase the quantity of bottles and cans collected for recycling. There will also be less going to landfill and incineration. Scotland's deposit return system will be good for our climate and good for our communities.
- improve the quality of material collected, to allow for higher value recycling - by improving the quality of recycled material generated in Scotland, we can maximise its economic value.
- encourage wider behavioural change around materials – this includes reducing the quantity of single use bottles and cans that are littered by the public and encouraging drinks manufacturers to make their packaging more sustainable.
- deliver maximum economic and societal benefits for Scotland – the scheme will contribute to Scotland's low carbon economy and generate new jobs, while creating opportunities to raise funds for good causes.

## Who will run the system?

We expect the system to be run by an industry-led, privately owned system administrator and operated on a not-for-profit basis. This is a similar approach to that taken by most other deposit return systems around the world. Deposit return is an example of extended producer responsibility, whereby producers are required to deal with their used packaging responsibly, according to set standards.

## What will happen to the bottles and cans that are returned?

The bottles and cans collected by the system will be recycled. As well as an increased volume of materials available for recycling, materials will be collected separately so the quality of recycled material available in Scotland will improve. The system aims to capture 90% of drinks containers for recycling within three years, making it a significant step in Scotland's fight against litter and climate change.

## What are the benefits for communities?

Community organisations, such as schools, will have the opportunity to act as return points for empty containers. Communities will also benefit from reductions in littering and the collective benefits of tackling climate change. Consumers could choose to donate their deposit to a charity or good cause.

The campaign is led by the Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland (APRS) and more than one hundred organisations have joined our coalition.

For further information please visit:  
[www.haveyogotthebottle.org.uk](http://www.haveyogotthebottle.org.uk) or  
[www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/deposit-return-scheme](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/deposit-return-scheme)

[www.haveyogotthebottle.org.uk](http://www.haveyogotthebottle.org.uk)



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