

# PROP **FACT** Sheet

Plastic Tubs and Bottles

## Recyclable Bottles



Openings smaller than necks

## Nonrecyclable Tubs



Openings wider than necks



These look like tubs but are considered bottles:

- Coffee
- Peanut Butter
- Frozen Drinks
- Medicine



This looks a bit like a bottle but is, in fact a tub:

- Yoplait Yogurt

### Why does it matter?

There are many different kinds of plastics, each with its own unique property. Some are made to be rigid and durable while others are designed to be soft and malleable. Since each type is different in nature they have different physical and chemical properties; this includes their melting points. In order to recycle plastics effectively, they need to be sorted into like groups so that they can be melted down into a form where they can be re-made.

Plastic bottles are made from high grade plastics, generally PolyethyleneTerephthalate (PET, PETE) and High Density Polyethylene (HDPE). These plastics are denoted on containers by a #1 and #2 respectively inside of the recycling logo.

Plastic tubs are frequently made from Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE) and Polypropylene (PP), #4 and #5 respectively. These plastics are used more seldom than PETE and HDPE and make up much less of the container waste stream.

Plastic bottles and plastic tubs are made using different fabrication processes. Plastic bottles are made using a blow molding process that heats up plastic inside of a mold. Tubs, on the other hand, are made using a standard injection molding process.

*This fact sheet is provided by the Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania (PROP), the state's affiliate to the National Recycling Coalition (NRC). Visit [www.proprecycles.org](http://www.proprecycles.org) for additional fact sheets on other recycling topics. We can also be contacted by phone at 800-769-PROP, via e-mail at [prop@proprecycles.org](mailto:prop@proprecycles.org) or by traditional mail at P.O. Box 25, Bellwood, PA 16617.*