

How to recycle lithium ion batteries

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Cross sections of the recycled cathode particles (A) and particles made from new materials (B), taken with an X-ray microscope. The scale bar is 10 micrometers in (A) and 5 micrometers in (B). Credit: "Recycled cathode materials enabled superior performance for lithium-ion batteries," by Xiaotu Ma, et al., in *Joule*, Vol. 5, No. 11; Nov. 17, 2021 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joule.2021.09.005>

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Lithium-ion batteries are at the heart of nearly every electric vehicle, laptop and smartphone, and they are essential to storing renewable energy in the face of the climate emergency. But all of the world's current mining operations cannot extract enough lithium and other key minerals to meet skyrocketing demand for these batteries. Establishing new mines is an expensive, years-long effort. And mining also creates a host of environmental headaches--such as depleting local water resources and polluting the nearby region with runoff debris--that have led to protests against new mines.

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