City of Ipswich

Transition from FOGO to GO

Community Engagement Report
Phase 1

January 2025



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Disclaimer: Quantitative and qualitative data was collected from participants during the engagement, in accordance with council's Information Privacy Policy. Quantitative data was downloaded from the various digital platforms and/or transcribed into a master Excel database by project staff. The data was cleaned, de-identified, aggregated and charted in the master database. Open thematic analysis of qualitative comments was carried out using Excel. For the purposes of this report, percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number, which may result in a total not equal to 100%.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Queensland Government is responding to community concerns around waste odours and are looking to change environmental standards for composting. With these changes, food organics will be considered highly odorous, and processing sites will require significant infrastructure upgrades.

Based on this, Ipswich City Council's food organics garden organics (FOGO) service is transitioning to the collection of garden organics (GO) only. Households with FOGO bins can continue to use their bins for the GO service.

Council welcomed feedback from the community on the transition from FOGO to GO, seeking insights into how to make this a smooth transition for the community.

The themes and stakeholder insights identified in this report will help inform how council supports community through the transition from FOGO to GO.

WHY WE ENGAGED

Council engaged the community with aims to:

- raise awareness of the transition from FOGO to GO
- understand how the transition may impact households, businesses and schools
- explore opportunities on how council can support community through the transition.

Phase 1

Community Engagement



HOW WE ENGAGED

Consultation on the transition from FOGO to GO was undertaken between 15 July 2024 and 14 October 2024. The community was able to contribute their feedback through:

- Shape Your Ipswich
- community engagement event
- email
- phone.

To maximise engagement, the following communication channels were used to reach the community and trigger awareness.

Shape Your Ipswich

Two email campaigns were sent out via Shape Your Ipswich. The first campaign was sent on 15 July 2024 and was sent out to Shape Your Ipswich members who had selected any of the following categories of interest/projects:

- Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change
- Waste/Resource Recovery
- Resource Recovery in Ipswich
- Ipswich FOGO Trial.

This campaign was sent to a total of 597 members, of which 231 opened the email.

The second campaign was sent on 25 September 2024 and was sent out to Shape Your Ipswich's newsletter subscribers. This campaign was sent to a total of 3,701 members, of which 1,625 opened the email.

Direct Mail

A formal notification was sent by mail to households who had signed up to the FOGO bin service. The letter provided an update on the project including information on the transition from FOGO to GO and directed recipients to Shape Your Ipswich for further information and feedback channels.

Ipswich Youth Advisory Council

Ipswich Youth Advisory Council (IYAC) comprises of young people aged between 13-18 years who come together to have a voice for raising issues and sharing ideas that affect young people. The project was shared at an IYAC meeting on 6 August 2024 as part of educating younger Ipswich audiences on the projects currently open for feedback. A total of 20 students attended the meeting.

Sustainable Ipswich Campaign

Sustainable Ipswich is an annual program of events and activities celebrating everyday actions our community can take for a clean, green city with a circular economy. The program aims to raise awareness of community-led sustainability initiatives and celebrated local Ipswich 'champions'. The 6 weeks of the campaign included 34 individual interactive events/opportunities for residents to engage with the program across multiple locations in Ipswich. As part of this, one community engagement event was held in which community were encouraged to provide feedback on the transition from FOGO to GO.

Overall, these activities led to 662 views of the Shape Your Ipswich page and 110 contributors throughout the engagement as outlined in the table below.

Engagement Channels	Contributors[1]
Shape Your Ipswich	48
One Community Engagement Event	22
Phone	25
Email	15
Total	**110**

[1] Total number of unique individuals who submitted feedback per engagement channel. An individual who makes more than one contribution on a single engagement channel is only counted as a single contributor. Noting individuals may be counted multiple times if submitting feedback across multiple engagement channels.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

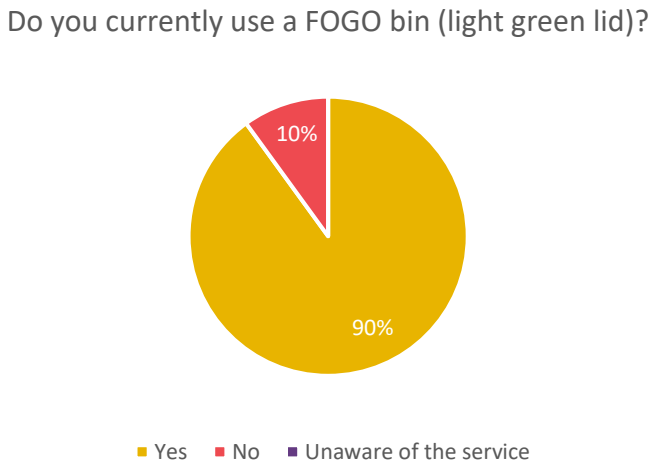
Shape Your Ipswich

Comments were captured via one engagement tool on the project page, What's the GO with Organics, hosted on Shape Your Ipswich. Survey questions can be seen in Appendix 1.

A summary of the feedback has been outlined below.

Usage

When asked whether respondents currently used a FOGO bin, 90% stated yes, confirming most respondents have personal experience using the service. While 10% stated they did not use a FOGO bin, none said they were unaware of the service, suggesting all respondents had some level of familiarity with the service.

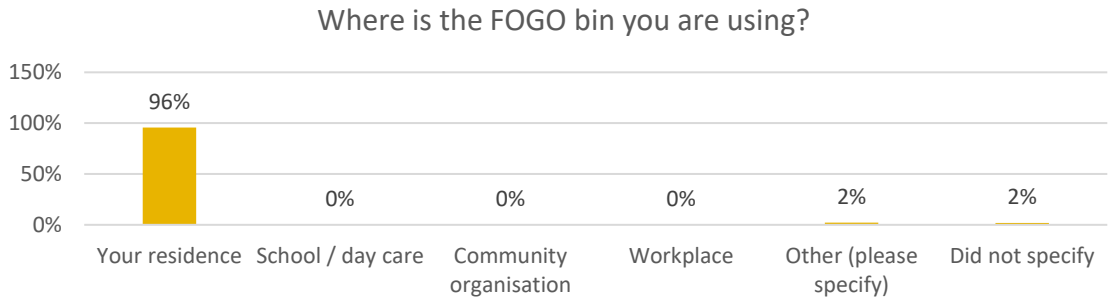


Use FOGO Bin Service

Of the respondents who selected that they did use the FOGO bin service, 96% confirmed their bin was located at their personal residence. One respondent selected 'other', with the comment:

- "Commercial service at home."

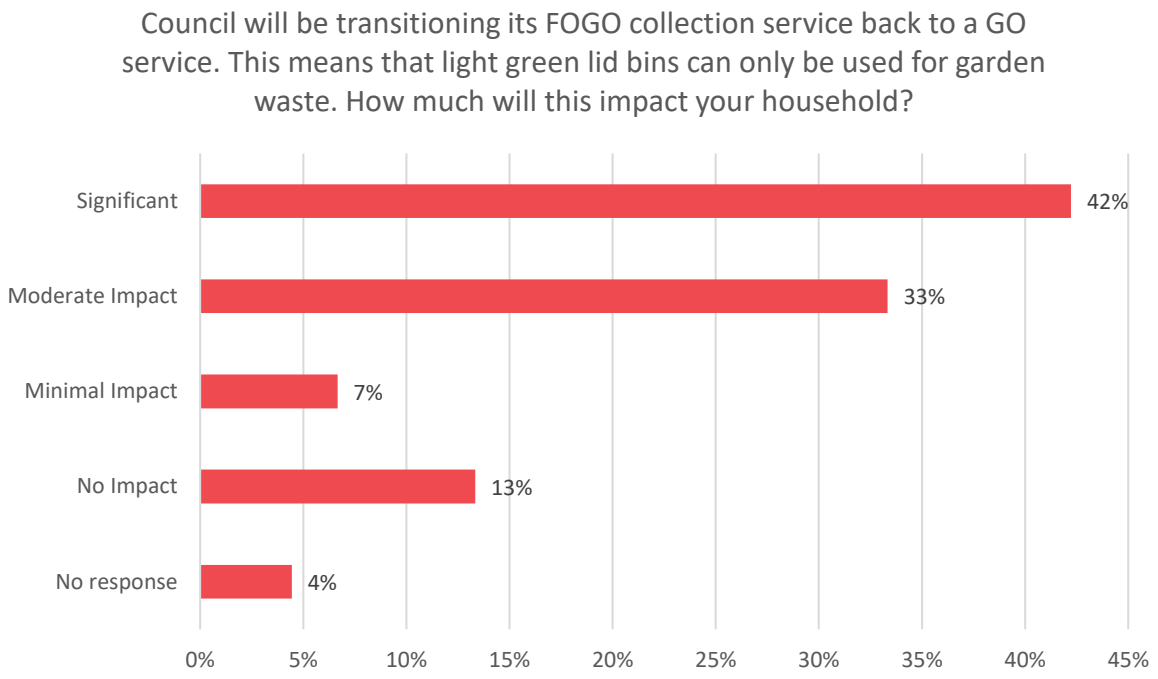
It is noted that the feedback provided will therefore be mostly representative of experiences of community members using FOGO bins at their residence. Schools, community organisations, workplaces and other locations may have different experiences and perceptions that have not been captured in this engagement.



92% of respondents confirmed which suburb their FOGO bin was located, with 27 different suburbs across Ipswich identified, capturing all four divisions.

Please confirm what suburb your FOGO bin is located			
Augustine Heights	2%	Leichhardt	2%
Barellan Point	2%	Newtown	2%
Bellbird Park	7%	North Booval	5%
Booval	2%	North Ipswich	5%
Brassall	2%	Raceview	10%
Bundamba	2%	Redbank Plains	7%
Camira	2%	Ripley	5%
Collingwood Park	2%	Silkstone	2%
Deebing Heights	2%	South Ripley	2%
Dinmore	2%	Spring Mountain	2%
Eastern Heights	5%	Springfield	2%
Flinders View	2%	Springfield Lakes	10%
Goodna	2%	West Ipswich	2%
Karalee	2%		

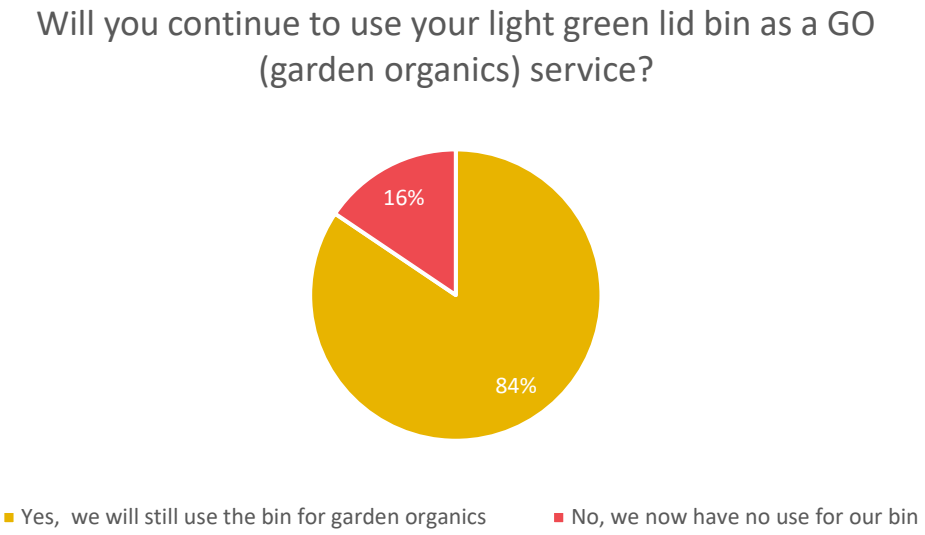
When asked about the transition from the FOGO to GO bin service, most respondents (75%) reported that this change would have moderate to significant impacts on their household.



Reasoning provided for perceived impact have been outlined in the table below.

Level of impact	**Reasoning**
Moderate to significant impact	• Primarily/only use service for food organics • Unaware of/unable to use alternative sustainable disposal methods • Concerns for environmental impacts due to change • Home alterations already undertaken for FOGO • Concerns of maggots if disposing food in general bin
Minimal to no impact	• Primarily/only use service for garden organics • Alternative disposal methods for food waste used such as feeding pets, compost or goes to landfill

Despite the impacts respondents expected this change would have, 84% stated they would continue to use the service after the transition from FOGO to GO.



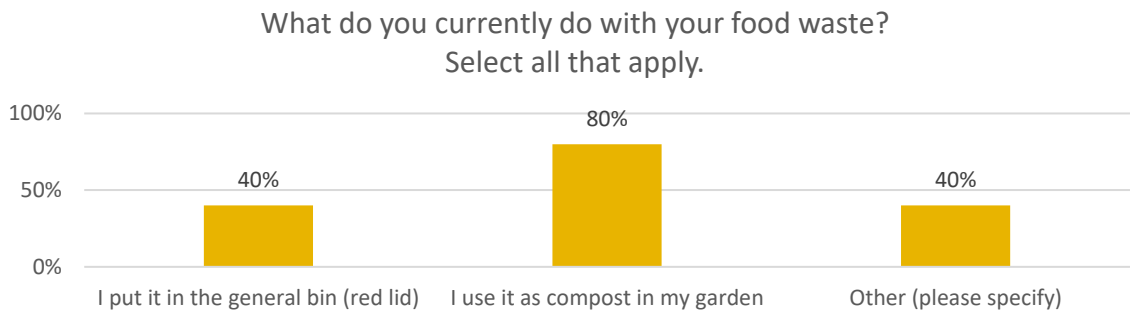
Do not use FOGO Bin Service

Of the respondents who selected that they do not currently use the FOGO bin service, the reason/s provided were:

- 80% referenced not needing the service
- 40% referenced not wanting to pay for the service

Of the respondents who selected that they do not currently use the FOGO bin service, most composted their food waste (80%). Of those who selected 'other', comments provided were:

- "I manage 100% of my organic waste by either composting (green garden waste), worm farming (food scraps), and shallow burial (bones & animal proteins)."
- "I rarely have any."



Future Food Organics Management

Respondents were asked how they planned to manage their food organics once FOGO had transitioned to GO. Many comments mentioned a combination of the general bin and composting, depending on the food product. Several comments also suggested interest and willingness to use alternative solutions from the general bin if accessible to them.

- 69% referenced using the general bin
- 51% referenced composting solutions
- 10% referenced used for animals (chickens, worm farms)

Examples of comments included:

- “As per previous answer, I will probably have to put it in general waste. I don't have much room for my own compost bin at home, and have little time to go find composting options around the area. Maybe this is something I will do in the future, but at this time I can't.”
- “Fruit, vegetables, paper, and dry type organic waste will go into our own compost bin until it is full. Meat, dairy, and animal waste will now go into the normal bin.”
- “I don't know. I may have to put it back in the red general waste bin but don't want to. I need time to figure out alternative waste methods for my food organics. I loved Fogo service but appreciate the reason for returning to GO.”
- “We feed our food organics to pets.”

When asked how council may be able to support the transition, the most popular suggestions from community were:

Theme	**Details**
Financial incentives for composting equipment for households	38% of comments referenced financial incentives for composting equipment for households. This included: • compost bin subscription • financial incentives for purchasing equipment such as compost bins, worm farms and wicking beds.
Promotion and education of available solutions	23% of comments referenced promotion and education of available solutions. This included: • free or low-cost education workshops for community • school education programs • more online resources • information leaflets sent to households.
Community facilities for dropping off waste	18% of comments referenced community facilities for dropping off waste. This included:

	• community composting hubs to encourage residents to turn their food scraps into nutrients for soil • community members able to collect food scraps for use in their gardens/for animals • collaborations with locals/community groups/schools/organisations to support running facility • include a garden for using compost and bringing community together.

Some respondents felt the FOGO bin service should remain, offering solutions for managing the odours such as increased frequency of collecting bins, cleaning bins, freezing food until bin day, or only including fruit and vegetables as part of food organics.

As part of final comments, approximately 46% of respondents expressed disappointment or frustration in the transition from FOGO to GO, with multiple commenting that they felt this decision did not reflect community expectations or were concerned by the negative impact on the environment. 37% noted the importance of alternative solutions to be implemented, reiterating suggestions provided in previous comments.

Community Engagement Events

One community engagement event was held to provide the broader community with general information on the project and capture feedback. A pop-up stall was held as part of the Sustainable Living Festival, held on 19 October 2024. Feedback captured during the event reflected community's interest in understanding the transition and how it may impact their household. While community members were often disappointed by the transition, they were generally understanding of the reasoning.

Email

The community was able to directly reach out to council via resourcerecovery@ipswich.qld.gov.au with feedback on this project. Emails generally sought further information about why council is transitioning from FOGO to GO, rather than providing specific feedback.

Phone

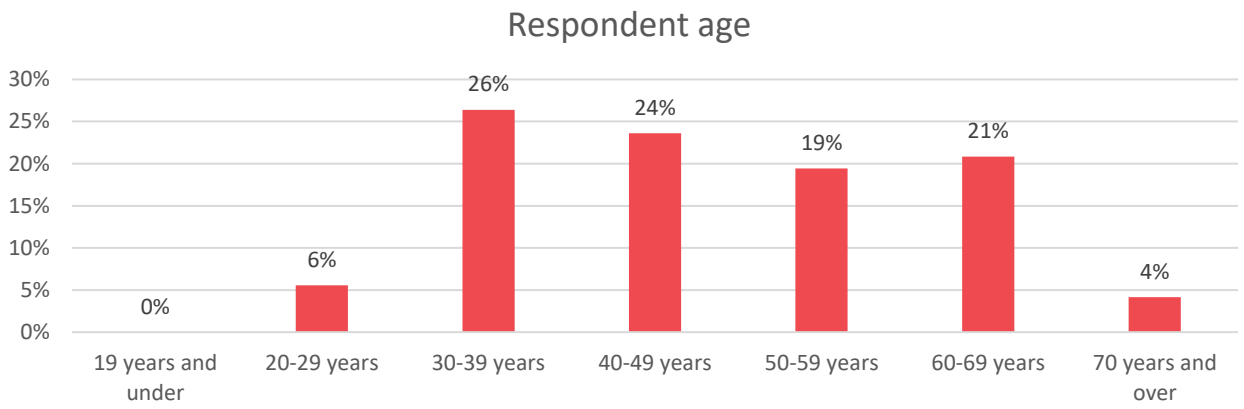
The community was able to directly reach out to council via 3810 6666 with feedback on this project. Phone calls generally sought further information why council is transition from FOGO to GO, with a number requesting to cancel their current FOGO service due to the change. However, it is noted that more than half of those that requested to cancel their service changed their mind by the end of the phone call once further information was received.

WHO ENGAGED

Where reasonable, demographic data was captured as part of engagement activities to understand the diversity of respondents.

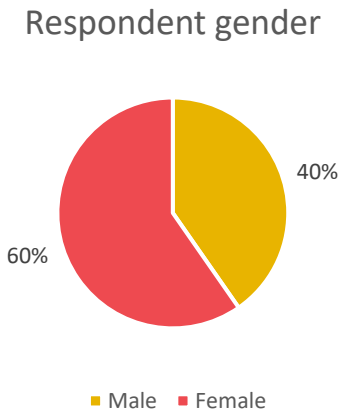
Age

Engagement in this project had diverse representation from most age groups. Contributors ranged between the 20-29 years age bracket, up to over 70 years and over.



Gender

Of respondents who shared their gender, 60% identified as female, and 40% identified as male.



FINDINGS

Review and analysis of the data from all engagement activities identified the following key findings from the community.

Findings as outlined in this report are to be shared publicly via Shape Your Ipswich, along with relevant project updates to show how the community's feedback has shaped this project.

- 75% of respondents who used the FOGO service felt the transition to GO would have moderate to significant impacts on their households. However, 84% reported that they would use the GO service after the transition.
- Of those who do not currently have a FOGO bin, the most common method for disposing of food waste was through various composting methods, followed by use of the general bin.
- Comments raised concerns around the environmental impact of this decision, with many respondents noting the importance of alternative accessible solutions.
- Community suggested council may be able to assist with the transition from FOGO to GO through various methods, inclusive of:
    - offering financial incentives for composting equipment for households
    - promotion and education of available solutions
    - providing community facilities for dropping off food waste.

The information provided in this report may be used to inform how council may assist community through the transition from FOGO to GO.

APPENDIX

1. SHAPE YOUR IPSWICH SURVEY QUESTIONS

HOW CAN WE MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM FOGO TO GO AS EASY AS POSSIBLE

01. Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)?

Select one answer only
◯ Yes
◯ No

02. Why don't you currently have a FOGO bin?

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)? is not "No"

Select one answer only
◯ Unaware of the service
◯ Do not need the service
◯ Do not want to pay for the service
◯ I am not a decision maker for this
◯ Other

03. What do you currently do with your food waste? Required

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)? is not "No"

Select all that apply

☐ I put it in the FOGO bin (light green lid)
☐ I put it in the general bin (red lid)
☐ I use it as compost in my garden
☐ Other (please specify)

04. Where is the FOGO bin you are using?

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)? is not "Yes"

We understand your FOGO habits may be different depending on where it is based. For the purposes of this survey, please only consider one location. You are able to complete this survey again to consider an additional location.

Select one answer only
◯ Your residence
◯ School / day care
◯ Community organisation
◯ Workplace
◯ Other (please specify)

05. How long has your school/day care used a FOGO service?

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Where is the FOGO bin you are using? is not "School / day care"

Select one answer only
◯ Less than 6 months
◯ 6 months - 12 month
◯ Over 1 year

06. Please confirm what suburb your FOGO bin is located

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)? is not "Yes"

07. Council will be transitioning its FOGO collection service back to a GO service. This means that light green lid bins can only be used for garden waste. Required

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)? is not "Yes" **OR**
- you have not selected either "Your residence" in question Where is the FOGO bin you are using?

How much will this impact your household?
◯ No impact
◯ Minimal impact
◯ Moderate impact
◯ Significant
◯ Unsure

08. Council will be transitioning its FOGO collection service back to a GO service. This means that light green lid bins can only be used for garden waste. Required

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)? is not "Yes" **OR**
- you have not selected either "Community organisation", or "Workplace" in question Where is the FOGO bin you are using?

How much will this impact your organisation?
◯ No impact

◯ Minimal impact
◯ Moderate impact
◯ Significant
◯ Unsure

09. Council will be transitioning its FOGO collection service back to a GO service. This means that light green lid bins can only be used for garden waste. Required

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)? is not "Yes"

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Where is the FOGO bin you are using? is not "School / day care"

How much will this impact your school/daycare?
◯ No impact
◯ Minimal impact
◯ Moderate impact
◯ Significant
◯ Unsure

10. Please share your reasoning behind your answer to the previous question

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)? is not "Yes"

11. How will students be impacted if they no longer have access to a food organics waste service?

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Where is the FOGO bin you are using? is not "School / day care"

12. Once FO is removed from your bin and it is GO only, what are you planning on doing with your household food organics (meat, food scraps, dairy, eggshells etc)

13. Council is exploring alternative ways to recover food organics. Do you have any suggestions on ways council could assist your household and the community with recovering food waste?

Skip this question if

- you have not selected either "Your residence", "Community organisation", or "Workplace" in question Where is the FOGO bin you are using? **AND**
- your answer to question Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)? is not "No"

14. Council is exploring alternative ways to recover food organics. Do you have any suggestions on ways council could assist your school / day care with recovering food waste?

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Where is the FOGO bin you are using? is not "School / day care"

15. Will you continue to use your light green lid bin as a GO (garden organics) service?

Skip this question if

- your answer to question Do you currently use a FOGO bin (light green lid)? is not "Yes"

Select one answer only
◯ Yes, we will still use the bin for garden organics
◯ No, we now have no use for our bin

16. Please share any other feedback on the transition from FOGO to GO



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