

How Do I Backyard Compost?

Step 1 Decide what kind of compost bin you want to use. You can purchase composting bins at your local hardware store or make one from non-pressure treated lumber.

Step 2 Decide where to place your container. Somewhere where it is easily accessed but far enough away that any odors won't be a bother. Place it on bare ground away from large trees in a partially sunny location away from wooded structures that are susceptible to rot.

Step 3 Keep a small container in your kitchen to hold scraps until they are ready to be taken out to your composter.



How to avoid animals

- ◇ When you add food waste be sure to either dig it into the existing compost or cover it with soil
- ◇ Do not add meat scraps or fat
- ◇ Use a container with a tight fitting lid, hinged at one side and latched at the other
- ◇ Line the sides and bottom with heavy duty mesh wire



Containers

Although containers are not essential they are recommended and they are less likely to attract pests.

There are many types of containers available or you can build one yourself. The ideal size is between 3 to 5 feet square.

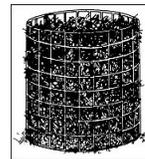


Garbage can bottom removed and holes drilled on the sides

Example of a locally available composter



Cedar crate—can also be made from used pallets



Galvanized Wire mesh container

Containers are available locally from Home Hardware, Canadian Tire and the Ottawa Valley Waste Recovery Centre.



Please keep this brochure for future reference



COMPOSTING AT HOME HOW TO GET STARTED

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Committee

&



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What Is Composting?

Compost is a dark, earthy nutrient-rich mixture called “humus” and is the result of the natural breakdown of organic material. The organic material is first broken down by bacteria and fungi, which break down the plant tissue.

Protozoa and roundworms feed on the bacteria and fungi. Centipedes, millipedes, sow bugs, red worms and earthworms can be found shortly after in your pile. Heat build up in the compost pile is the result of organisms eating and moving in the pile.



Why Compost?

Environmentally composting makes good sense. It is a simple cost effective natural way to recycle your kitchen and garden waste. By composting you are also reducing the amount of organic household waste that would otherwise go to your local landfill site.

What to Compost?

One third of your household garbage can be composted:

Nitrogen-rich **Green** materials

- ◇ dry grass clippings
- ◇ house plants and cut flowers
- ◇ fruit and vegetable scraps
- ◇ tea bags and coffee grounds
- ◇ egg shells

Carbon-rich **brown** materials such as:

- ◇ dry leaves
- ◇ Straw
- ◇ woodchips
- ◇ sawdust



How long will It take?

It will vary. If you cut up your kitchen and yard waste into smaller pieces, the process will be faster. Frequent turning to aerate the compost pile will speed up the process.

Some composting methods produce compost in two months, others take as long as two years or more.

Where to Compost?

Choose a spot in your property that is easily accessible, has good drainage and is airy and close to a water hose.

A partly sunny / partly shady spot is good, as too hot or too cool an area is not optimal for the soil micro-organisms to stay alive to do their work.



!! DO NOT ADD !!

- ◇ meat, bones, or fish scraps
- ◇ cooked kitchen scraps
- ◇ fatty food including butter, oil, cheese and salad dressings, all dairy products
- ◇ pet waste or kitty litter
- ◇ diseased or insect infested plants
- ◇ foliage with residue of chemical sprays / weed killers
- ◇ problem weeds and dandelions
- ◇ diapers
- ◇ metal and plastics
- ◇ vacuum and dryer lint

Adding Food will attract animals

Did you Know

- ◇ Compost makes your plants grow faster, bigger and stronger
- ◇ Using compost as a mulch will reduce the need for weeding and watering your garden
- ◇ Home composting is quick to do and
- ◇ potentially smelly organics are not kept in your garbage bags waiting for collection day
- ◇ Organic matter in the landfill is the main source of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, and leachate a potentially harmful liquid that must be safely managed
- ◇ Burning garden waste pollutes the air
- ◇ Adding compost to garden soil improves the fertility of the soil and encourages garden life (worms) and promotes plant growth



Tips on leaves and grass

Adding too much grass clippings to your compost at one time is not a good idea as they tend to rot and can become smelly.

Instead:

- ◇ add them in thin layers
- ◇ allow them to dry in the sun before adding them
- ◇ mix them with dry material such as leaves
- ◇ leave them on your lawn to return nutrients to the soil



The Compost Recipe
Greens + Browns + Water + Air