

How to Make COMPOST

WHAT DO I NEED TO GET STARTED?

TOOLS AND INGREDIENTS

- A standard plastic compost bin or a homemade compost bin that's made from timber, chicken wire etc.
- A compost turner and garden fork.

'GREEN' ORGANIC INGREDIENTS

Kitchen fruit and vegetable scraps, egg shells, small amounts of carbohydrates (rice and pasta), coffee grinds, teabags, green cut grass and clippings, flowers, manure (cow, chicken or horse).

'BROWN' ORGANIC INGREDIENTS

Dried leaves, twigs, soil, straw, newspaper and shredded cardboard.

Once you have your ingredients, composting is simply a matter of adding them to your bin in the right quantities. It's useful to think of your compost like a lasagne: you need alternating layers of green and brown ingredients to create good compost.

Location: Position your bin so that you have easy access to it from your kitchen. It can be placed both in the sun or the shade; the warmer the location, the faster the compost will work.

CREATE YOUR FIRST LAYER with dried leaves and twigs. Place these 'brown ingredients' at the bottom of your compost bin and water thoroughly.

YOUR SECOND LAYER

Keeping your compost aerated: Giving your compost access to air is one of the simplest ways to speed up the composting process. To keep your compost aerated, turn it over or fluff it up every few weeks. You can do this with a garden fork, or a compost turner tool.

FOR YOUR THIRD AND FOURTH LAYERS, return to brown and then green ingredients, including materials such as shredded newspaper or straw and vegie scraps. Add water to moisten if needed.

YOU CAN NOW ADD food scraps and other green materials to the bin. Every time you empty your kitchen scrap bucket, be sure to cover with a layer of brown material to build a balanced and productive compost. Your compost is ready when it looks like rich, dark soil.

SIZE MATTERS

Just like our human digestive system, your compost will digest and break down foods faster or slower depending on the size of the food. By breaking big ingredients up into smaller pieces, you'll allow your compost to break down faster and quicken the pace of your composting.

Using a diverse variety of ingredients will produce compost that's rich in nutrients. Depending on what your garden and kitchen are creating, don't hesitate to mix up what kind of green or brown ingredients you add to your compost.

2



Add the ingredients

The ingredients are those rich in carbon (brown materials) and those rich in nitrogen (green materials). Make sure large materials are chopped or shredded.

3



Add water as needed

Make sure the pile stays moist, but not too wet (it should feel like a damp sponge). Water is a key to success!

4



Keep things moving

Turn your compost mixture to add air to the mix. This helps speed up the composting process. Air is a key to success!

1



Choose a place

The ideal compost area is a dry, shady spot near a water source, with dimensions of 1m x 1m x 1m.

5



Wait a while

When the compost no longer gives off heat and becomes dry, brown and crumbly, it's fully cooked and ready to be fed to the garden.

ingredients + water + air = temperature
(which activates the whole process!)

FAQs

What ingredients should I limit in my compost?

Onions, lemons and acidic ingredients should be added sparingly to new composts, as these can be difficult to break down and affect the pH of your compost. Do not add meat and dairy products as these can attract rodents and pests, and dog or cat droppings are not suitable for your compost either.

Why does my compost smell?

A strong smell is a sign that your compost is out of balance. This is often due to a combination of too much moisture and not enough air. Turn or fluff your compost to make sure it's aerated, then add a layer of dry brown material.

Why isn't my compost breaking down?

This can happen if your compost is too dry, too wet or isn't receiving the amount of air it needs. Every time you add material to your compost, make sure you're giving it the right ratio of green and dry ingredients - much greener than brown.

Why does my compost have flies?

Vinegar flies, which look like fruit flies, are not a problem unless they're bothering you. The easiest way to eradicate would be to cover your compost with an old piece of carpet or hessian to eliminate their access to the top of the compost.

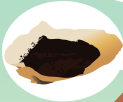
WHAT STUFF TO COMPOST

GREEN Materials

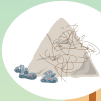
Fruit and vegetable scraps



Coffee grounds and filter paper



Vacuum bag contents



Teabags



Eggshells



Grass and plant clippings



Cooked foods and breads



BROWN Materials

Dry leaves



Wood chips



Shredded paper



Sawdust and wood shavings



Kitchen and toilet roll tubes



Straw and hay



Cardboard



Anything that was once alive,
can be composted!

NO MEAT or BONES!

