

Helpful Hints

- 1 Air is essential for efficient composting. Lack of air causes the organic material to compost or rot too slowly and creates terrible odours (of ammonia, rotten eggs, etc.). Turning over your compost regularly with a spade helps the air to get in, but in cold weather too frequent turning will allow too much heat to escape.
- 2 Adding nitrogen “greens” (or nitrogen fertiliser from the garden centre) is helpful to speed up the process.
- 3 Smaller, chopped up or shredded rubbish will compost faster.
- 4 Do not use sawdust or shavings from chemically treated timber. Treated timbers won't decompose and the poisonous chemicals used in timber treatment (e.g. arsenic, chromium) may poison your garden.
- 5 Avoid putting in meats, fats, and dairy products as these will produce unpleasant odours which will attract rats, mice, and other animals.
- 6 Keep the compost covered to keep in the heat and keep out excess moisture.
- 7 Avoid using insect killing sprays near the bin.
- 8 When your bin is full and ready for use, some of the well rotted compost can be used as a “starter” for your next compost heap.
- 9 Mix the compost thoroughly into the soil in your garden.

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Problems or Queries

Ring the Environmental Health Office
Telephone: 570-6666



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Your Guide To
Clean And Green

Home Composting

Why Compost?

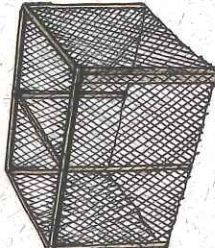
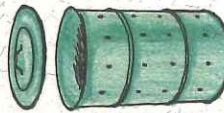
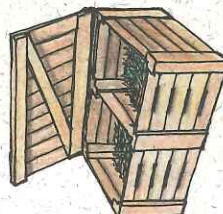
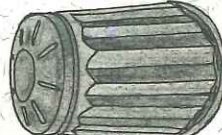
- When added to soil compost increases soil fertility and improves its texture.
- Compost rich soils grow healthier, more productive plants.
- Composting decreases the amount of waste going to our landfills.

What is Composting?

“Composting” is a rotting or decomposing process which takes advantage of nature's own way of breaking down ORGANIC MATERIAL (via worms, insects and micro-organisms) to make a humus which can be used to enrich your own garden soil.



Using your bin



Begin by placing a layer of coarse twiggly material at the bottom of your bin.

This will help your compost to "Breathe".

Pile the first-layer of organic material about 150-200 mm deep (6-8 inches).

Organic material can be split generally into two categories:

"Greens" – nitrogen rich wastes: Kitchen food scraps, fruit peels, coffee grounds, tea bags, grass and plant clippings, seaweed, fish bones, chopped weeds (less noxious varieties).

"Browns" – high in carbon and other elements: dried leaves, untreated sawdust and wood shavings, hay, peat, shredded paper and newspaper, egg shells and crushed sea shells, wood ash.

Alternate shovels full of "green" and "brown" organic materials with a couple of shovels full of soil.

Adding nitrogen rich manure, blood and bone, or lime from time to time is OK.

Cover the pile to protect it from too much rain, and leave it "to do its own thing".

On average, decomposition will take 6-8 weeks, or less during the hot summer months.

Basic Layering



Manure, fish bones, seaweed



Egg shells, seashells



Grass clippings, chopped weeds



Dried leaves, peat, hay



Soil (or compost activator)



Kitchen food scraps



First layer! coarsely chopped, twiggly, plant material

