

HOME COMPOSTING

Practical steps for a healthier garden and environment

Composting is the art of diverting organic waste from the landfill and turning it into a rich soil amendment called humus. Humus is the end product of compost that has gone through the full decomposition process and all of the nutrients have been released back into the soil. Backyard composting is easy to learn and is full of benefits for you and the environment.



WHAT TO COMPOST

Organic waste that can be composted include *fruit & vegetable peelings, spoiled leftovers, coffee grounds, plant waste, sticks, grass clippings & leaves.*

Do not include:

Dairy or meat products, animal waste, poison oak and weed seeds.



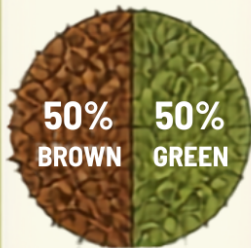
THE FIVE KEY FACTORS



FOOD

Use the Twenty-Fifty Rule:

A perfect mixture of material consists of $\frac{1}{2}$ carbon (carbon-based material) and $\frac{1}{2}$ green-based material by weight.



AIR

To Turn or Not To Turn:

The organisms that live inside your compost need air to survive. Mix or turn the pile 3-5 times per season using a garden tool. Proper aeration will create a big difference. You will know if your compost is not getting enough oxygen if the pile smells of ammonia.



WATER

Keep it moist, not dripping:

The organisms living in your compost also need water to survive, but not too much or they will drown. The ideal moisture level of your compost pile should be like that of a wrung out sponge.



SURFACE AREA

Small pieces are best:

Cut up/shred organic waste before placing into the compost. This increases the surface area and speed of decomposition. Store your food waste scraps in the freezer to save room, reduce smells & increase decomposition speed - organics break down at the cell level when frozen.



BIN VOLUME

Use the right size bin:

A bin should be between the 3'-5' x 3'-5' and 5'-5' x 5'-5'. Try not to have a bin or pile that is too large, as it is easier to manage two or three medium bins/piles at a time. Your compost can be in piles covered by tarps, or you can build a compost bin yourself out of new or recycled materials (pallets, old trash tote, hamper, chicken wire), or buy a new one!



Small scraps.
Big impact.

DID YOU KNOW?

Composting organic material reduces methane emissions, extends landfill lifespans, improves soil structure, boosts plant health, and reduces the need for chemical fertilizers.