

HOME COMPOSTING GUIDE



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GETTING STARTED

LOCATION

Your composter should be placed in a location that is not in direct sunlight. Keep away from trees and bushes so roots cannot reach the contents. Be sure to place your composter in a location that is easy to access.

SITE PREPARATION

1. Once the ideal location is chosen, work the ground with a shovel to allow decomposers, such as organisms, insects, etc., to enter the composter. A hard surface will not allow decomposers into the composter. Remove all sod and position the composter with the opening against the ground. (Do place on concrete, rock or asphalt).
2. Install the composter on the prepared site.

GETTING STARTED

Place 5 or 6 centimeters of small branches or twigs at the bottom of the composter and make a hole in the center (like a nest). Then put a layer of dead leaves, compost or earth. Preparing the bottom of the composter will allow for better aeration, stabilize humidity and prevent decomposing matter from compacting into the ground.

You can then start filling your composter with home and garden waste. Avoid filling your composter too quickly. Add small quantities of waste on a daily basis.

The secret of making good compost consists in maintaining a balance between the green and brown waste put into the composter. It is important to make sure that both green and brown waste are added. Start by putting more brown waste than green waste in your composter in order to achieve the correct balance between carbon-rich and nitrogen-rich materials. Add 2 to 3 parts of brown waste for each part of green waste. Once the composting process has begun, add one part of brown waste for each part of green waste.



HUMIDITY

Humidity is key to bacteria development, which is why your composter should always be slightly humid but never damp (like a wet sponge), as this would prevent air circulation. The vents located on the upper section of your composter are designed to help control air circulation and the humidity level in your composter. Just turn the lid to adjust these vents. Leftovers help keep the humidity level adequate. During the summer, add a little water as needed to maintain the necessary level of humidity.

It is recommended to alternate with humid and dry layers of waste. Layers should be 5 to 15 centimeters thick. Mix the contents of the composter once a week with a pitchfork. Add a shovelful of soil to further balance the mixture if necessary.

Dampen newspapers and cardboard before putting into your composter.

AERATION

It is important to open the bottom vents of your composter so that oxygen can enter. This will help the waste to decompose while also eliminating any foul odours. If aeration is not properly achieved, the materials will rot and start to smell. Clear obstructed vents and aerate the compost regularly with a pitchfork, rake, shovel or aerator every 7 to 10 days. The best way to aerate the compost is to turn it over with a pitchfork regularly. New materials should be placed in the center, which is the most active area of the pile, while partially decomposed materials should go on the outer edges of the pile.

Do not compact layers of waste as this will prevent air from circulating in the composter.

WHAT CAN BE COMPOSTED?

	RECOMMENDED	LESS RECOMMENDED	PROHIBITED
KITCHEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leftover fruit and peels • Vegetable peelings • Spoiled foods • Coffee grinds, tea bags • Eggshells • Bread, pasta • Cooked foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citrus fruit peelings • In small quantities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leftover fish - Deli meats - Cheese rinds (always cover with soil) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pits • Shells • Bones • Large quantities of meat • Juices and sauces • Cardboard packaging • Dairy products
HOME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper, cardboard • Hair, wood fibers • Potted plants, cut flowers, cotton, wool, silk • Sawdust • Old soil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other plants • Chicken manure • Pig manure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glossy or waxed paper • Colour-printed paper • Human feces • Vacuum cleaner bags • Oil, rubber • Plastic
GARDEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branches, leaves • Cut grass • Vegetable waste • Weeds • Wood ashes • Manure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birch, poplar and hazel tree branches • Large quantities of grass or hay • Diseased plants • Weeds with seeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oak branches • Large branches or treated wood

WANT TO SPEED UP THE COMPOSTING CYCLE?

Great aeration is key to speeding up the process. Without the right tool, however, this can be difficult to achieve.



The Spyro 360 Compost Mixer features folding wings for effortless turning and mixing.



WHAT CAN BE COMPOSTED?

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO PROPERLY COMBINE THE RIGHT AMOUNTS OF BROWN AND GREEN WASTE.

The following chart will help you to make adjustments and find the correct balance.

	CARBON-RICH (BROWN)	NITROGEN-RICH (GREEN)
Grass		+ + +
Fruit & vegetable peelings		+ +
Whole vegetables	+	+ +
Manure	+ + +	+ +
Weeds	+ + +	+
Branches and twigs	+ + +	
Straw	+ + +	
Sawdust	+ + +	

The more diversified the waste you put in your composter, the better your compost will be. Avoid adding processed foods or those containing artificial ingredients as this will diminish the quality of your compost as well as spread contaminants into the environment.

THERE IS NO SINGLE RECIPE FOR MAKING GOOD COMPOST. HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO HELP YOU ADJUST CARBON AND NITROGEN LEVELS AS NEEDED:

- 1 If the compost doesn't heat up a little:** Add green waste (**nitrogen**)
- 2 If there is a strong ammonia odour:** Add brown waste (**carbon**)
- 3 If there is a strong rotten egg odour:** Turn the compost with a pitchfork to aerate .

STORE KITCHEN WASTE IN A SNAP!

Use one of our specially designed airtight containers that are equipped with odour-blocking charcoal filters to store kitchen waste. This will save you the task of having to go to the composter every day.



Put some shredded newspaper at the bottom of the container before filling it with kitchen waste. This will prevent waste from sticking to the sides and help keep the container clean.



COMPOSTING CYCLES

THE SEASONS OF COMPOSTING

The best time of the year to make compost is from spring to fall. If you fill your composter during this period, the compost will be ready or almost ready by late fall. If the compost is ready, store it in weather-resistant bags and use the following year. If the compost is not ready, remove it from the composter and place it on the ground covered by a plastic tarp to protect it from weather conditions. The compost will continue to cure and be ready by spring. You can start adding new waste in your composter during the winter months (no turning required). Come spring, just mix the accumulated waste with carbon-rich materials in order to start a new batch of compost! In colder climates, winter is considered as a “storage” phase more than a “composting” phase.

HARVESTING

The reward of composting comes from using your nutrient-rich compost to kick-start plants in the spring. How can you be sure that the compost is ready? Here are two signs that will let you know if your compost is ready to be used:

1. Very little of the original waste is still recognizable (maybe a few small twigs, eggshells or leaves). The compost will have the colour and texture of rich earth.
2. The compost will have a stable temperature. (will not give off heat)

WHERE TO USE YOUR COMPOST

Once the compost is ready, there are many are different ways you can use it:

Use compost in the garden, flowerbeds or underneath trees or bushes to feed root systems.

A FEW SIMPLE RULES TO REMEMBER

- Slice or chop larger pieces of waste to prepare the surfaces where decomposers will start doing their magic (branches and twigs should be ground up into small pieces before going into the composter).
- Avoid adding thick layers of the same matter. Mix waste with newspaper, cardboard or sawdust.
- Add a little soil to enrich the compost with microorganisms (especially important during start-up).
- Mix compost regularly. When adding grass clippings, mix thoroughly and do not layer more than 15 centimeters thick.
- Make sure vents are unobstructed.



MAKE COMPOST TEA!

An original way to fertilize your potted plants:

Fill a cloth or mesh bag with mature compost, immerse in tap water and infuse until water turns dark brown. Water plants with this preparation for outstanding results.



MORE USEFUL TIPS

1. Always cover large quantities of food **with soil or newspaper to avoid attracting insects and pests.**
2. While meat and fish can be composted, it is preferable not to put these foods in your composter **to avoid attracting insects and pests, including small animals.**

TAKE A LOOK AT OUR DIFFERENT STYLES OF COMPOSTERS AND ACCESSORIES

COMPOSTERS



ECO 1



ECO Master



Thermo King 400L



Thermo King 900L



Aerobin 200



Aerobin 400

ACCESSORIES



ProCompost Trash Can



Kitchen Carrier 9L



Organics Kitchen Collector 7L



Spyro 360 Compost Mixer

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