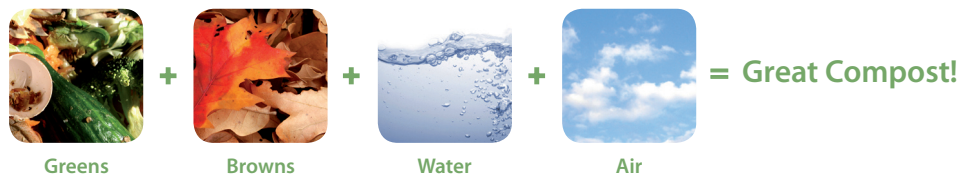


The Compost Recipe For Success



4 great reasons to compost

- it improves soil fertility and texture, and retains moisture and nutrients
- it is inexpensive and easy to do
- your garden will require less garden chemicals because compost rich soil grows healthier, more productive plants
- it reduces the amount of garden rubbish going to landfills

5 easy steps

1

Choose Your Site

Compost bins or heaps should be located in a sheltered, level area of the garden with good drainage and access. The site should be in a warm spot but not in full sun.

2

Pick a Compost Method

People use a variety of methods for composting:

Compost heap – a pile of garden/kitchen waste materials approximately 1 metre square and ½ to 1m high, covered with carpet or polythene.

Compost bin – made from plastic, timber or concrete blocks.

Three bin method – this is good for large gardens and usually consists of a large wood slat bin divided into three compartments. The compost is turned from one bin to the next every four to six weeks and should be ready for use by the end of that period. The process of turning keeps the product aerated and well mixed.

Trenching – for big gardens, bury kitchen rubbish (but not meat or dairy products) in trenches in your garden, cover with a good amount of soil and plant on top.

3

Add Your Waste Layer by Layer

To build the compost, start with a thick layer (15 cm) of twigs or coarse mulch at the base for drainage. Then add a thin layer of green waste. Cover with a layer of brown waste.

Get the right mix – an ideal mix is 1 to 2 parts green and 1 part brown in alternating layers. Too much green can lead to overheating, compaction and loss of oxygen, while too much brown can slow down the composting process.

Hint:

Both kitchen and garden material will compost much quicker when chipped chopped or crushed into smaller pieces. Rip and soak paper and cardboard in water prior to composting.

4

Keep It Moist

Keep your compost moist, like a damp sponge – too much water may result in a smelly, slimy mess, while not enough water will slow down composting process.

5

Turn, Turn, Turn

You should try and turn your compost regularly to increase air circulation, ensuring that there is an adequate supply of oxygen to aid the break down process.



Greens

kitchen vegetables
fruit scraps
tea leaves/bags
coffee grounds
soft garden debris
lawn clippings
animal manure

Browns

paper
hay
peat
wood ash
sawdust
leaves
cereal boxes
cardboard
vacuum cleaner dust

Avoid

meat
fish
oils
dairy products
wood
bones
glass
plastic
garden weeds

Composting

5 steps to great composting

Where can I use my compost?

Ideally the finished product should look like potting mix. However, it will not matter if it isn't perfect. As long as most of the material is broken down (egg shells will not completely disappear) and you have material with a soil like structure, your compost is ready to add to your garden.



Tips For Great Compost:

- Buy two bins for the kitchen: one for rubbish, the other for compost. This will remove the need to separate compostable waste from non-compostable waste later on.
- If your greens aren't very soggy, it's a good idea to moisten the browns as you add them.
- Cover your compost with a lid. Use carpet, sacking, corrugated iron or polythene. This keeps in the heat generated by the breaking down process and helps to prevent rain getting in or moisture evaporating away.
- If your compost bin develops a bad odour give it a turn – odour can be a sign of poor air circulation.

Where can I buy a compost bin?

- Most hardware stores sell compost bins
- Search the internet or Yellow Pages
- Build one from timber off cuts or concrete blocks



For more information:

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