

Compost

Fact Sheet 2

How to make compost

Getting ready

1. Find a flat, shaded area away from water or crops.
2. Make a barrier around the compost to stop water from getting out.
3. Make walls for your compost from star posts, garden stakes, chicken wire, wood panels, scrap metal sheeting, shade cloth or weed matting. You can also use a clean 44 gallon drum with holes (don't use drums previously holding chemicals or petrol).
4. Compost heaps need to be turned. You can turn over a large compost pile with your tractor. A small compost pile can be turned with a shovel or rake.
5. Cover your compost pile with carpet, a tarpaulin, wood, scrap metal or matting.
6. Shred material using a shredder, lawnmower or garden clippers.



What goes in

Material used in compost is made up of carbon and nitrogen. Carbon and nitrogen in the compost needs to be in a ratio of 25:1. This means you need to add more carbon to your heap than nitrogen.

Carbon: Brown material (25 parts)

- Straw
- Hay
- Breads
- Grains
- Wood ash
- Twigs

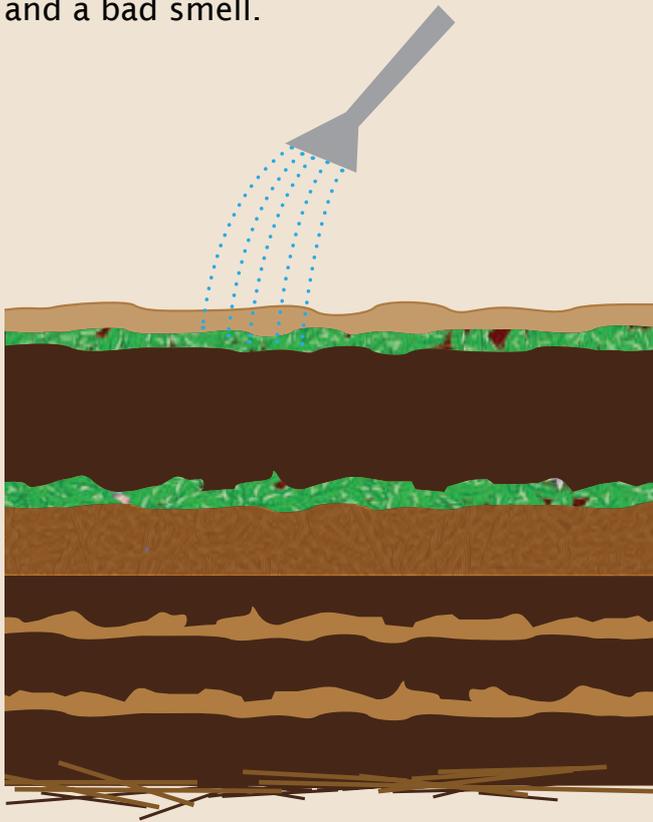
Nitrogen: Green material (1 part)

- Manure
- Fruit and vegetable scraps
- Green leaves
- Flowers
- Grass clippings
- Crop waste

Compost

What doesn't go in

Don't put meat, fish, dairy products, weed and plant seeds or dog and cat droppings in the compost. If the compost is not right it will have flies, rats, dangerous bacteria and a bad smell.



Slow Compost

Follow the 'Compost Steps' but turn it over only once a month. Add material when you want to. Check and add water when it gets dry. Slow compost takes 6 months to 2 years before it is ready but doesn't need much work.

Size

A compost pile needs to be 1 metre³ or bigger so it can get hot inside.

Compost Steps

Layer 1 Add carbon (brown material): On the bottom put twigs, straw, hay, bark and leaves.

Layer 2 Add nitrogen (green material): Cover Layer 1 with this material. You can add manure if you want to.

Layer 3 Cover Layer 2 with more straw and hay then water the compost so it is moist.

Layer 4 Add more brown material.

Layer 5 Add more green material and water compost again.

Repeat until bin or area is full.

Cover the compost.

Turn the compost twice a week.

Start a new heap rather than adding more material to this heap.

Fast Compost

Follow the 'Compost Steps' but also add garden soil, old compost or poultry litter. This will add good bacteria and make it rot faster. Fast compost takes 3 months if you turn the compost twice a week. If you turn it more the compost will be ready sooner. Add water if the compost gets dry.

For more information contact

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