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GREEN Page



Composting at Home

Composting at home is easy and is great for the garden and the planet! It can be done in a small bin or a larger pile, depending on the room you have available.

The main rules to remember are layers, moisture, and oxygen. You will want to layer carbon-base and nitrogen-base material to get a two-parts carbon to one-part nitrogen ratio. Some carbon base materials that work well are leaves, straw/hay, newspapers, saw dust, and wood chips. Nitrogen-based materials would include table scraps, fruit and vegetable scraps, tea leaves, coffee grounds, and flower cuttings. The smaller the material, the faster it will compost so it is a good idea to shred or cut up larger pieces.

The compost should remain moist at all times, but not soggy. Adding a cup of water each time you add material to your compost will help maintain the correct moisture. Keeping a cover over it will also help maintain the moisture and keep the core temperature elevated, which speeds up decomposition. A tarp, old carpet, or plastic sheeting can be used.

Oxygen is also very important for your compost pile. Oxygen is what allows the micro-organisms to grow and flourish. You should turn your compost pile two to three times a month. If you have larger carbon-base material in the pile such as straw, you may not need to turn it as often.

To kick start your compost, try adding some “activators”. Some common activators are comfrey leaves, young weeds, chicken manure, or grass clippings.



How to Make an Easy Compost Bin

You have been thinking about composting but not sure where to start. The first thing you will need is a bin to compost in. Here is an inexpensive and simple idea.

You will need a storage bin with lid (the darker the color the better) and a drill. You can even use a cracked one or one with a hole in it.

- 1) Drill random holes all over your storage bin including the bottom for drainage and the top for air circulation.
- 2) Put some dirt in the bottom of the bin for the first layer.
- 3) Add fruit or vegetable scraps, peels, and cores. Plant clippings work well too.
- 4) Add a cup of water to make the soil moist, not soggy.
- 5) Shake the bin each time you add material to mix it in and aerate the compost.

You should have compost in 4-6 months!

