

Easy Composting



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STEP 1: GATHER MATERIALS

- Large containers w/ lids (x2)
- Medium container (for browns)
- Small container (for greens)
- Drill (for quarter-sized holes)
- Water supply
- Small shovel or rake
- Bricks (x8-10 based on bin size)

STEP 2: CREATE YOUR BIN

You will need 1-2 large containers depending on the size of your family and how soon you want compost. For large families and a 1-year turnaround for compost, it is suggested to have 2-50 gallon containers but for smaller families, you can use a plastic bin that is typically to store clothes. In either case, it should be one that you don't mind getting very dirty.

Next, designate a spot outdoors for your compost container. Drill holes all around the sides and bottom as well as the top lid, every 8-9 inches. Should over time your container start bulging, you can reinforce the sides with duct tape. Place 4-5 bricks in a circle on the ground and rest your container on the bricks. The bricks are to help with aeration and drainage for your container.

STEP 3: LAYER, LAYER, LAYER

Part 1: Preparation - For your "greens," gather all food scraps and other items on the list below and remove all labels, packaging, or anything not 100% natural. Then cut everything into small pieces.

For your "browns," remove all packaging, tape, staples, and labels and shred or tear them into the smallest bits possible. Store your "greens" in a container on your counter for easy access, under your sink or near your garbage can. Same with your "browns."

STEP 3: LAYER, LAYER, LAYER

Part 2: Layer your compost “cake” - To start your compost bin, add a thick layer of leaves and small twigs on the bottom of the bin, about 12” for the large containers, a smaller layer for the smaller containers (think of this as your bottom layer of a layered cake). Next take your greens and spread them evenly (think of this as the layer of icing). Add a layer of browns on top of your greens layer every time. At this point you should water the materials so they are moist.

As you collect your greens and browns in your household, continue adding them to your compost bin, always ending with a layer of browns and adding a bit of water to keep it moist.

Part 3: Water - Water is an integral part of creating compost, if your greens and browns are not moist, your compost will not start decomposing. You can use a repurposed milk jug or hose to keep your layers moist. How wet your compost gets is dependent on the location, if it is exposed to sunlight and rain, your materials will turn into compost quicker.

In addition to keeping your compost moist, you may want to turn your compost with a small shovel or tool every couple of months. This is not a requirement of Easy Composting, but it will help accelerate it.

STEP 4: THE LAST INGREDIENT... TIME

You want to repeat your layering process until you have filled the entire bin or when it has been 6 months from the start of your bin, whichever comes first.

After it's filled or has been 6 months, place a lid on the container and leave it alone for 6 months. A good time spread to remember is April - September for the first bin and September - April for the second bin. Smaller families can have one container but they will need to turn or “move” your compost more frequently as it decomposes.

After leaving it alone for 6 months, your materials will magically combine and turn into compost.

WHAT CAN I COMPOST?

GREENS - Fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, loose tea leaves, green plants, flowers, grass clippings, bread, grains, nuts, pasta, bones and eggshells.

BROWNS - Paper, cardboard, human and pet hair, dry plants, potting soil, leaves, small twigs, tissues, toilet paper. And straw.

DO NOT COMPOST - Glossy paper, ashes, coals, fabrics, pet or human waste, meat, fish, dairy, fats or oils, plants with pesticides, weeds, treated wood products, plastics, styrofoam or or plastic-coated products.