



Composting at Home

QUICK START GUIDE



1. Choose a spot.

Should be:

- Easy to access all year round
- Free of standing water

2. Stock up on browns.

Browns are dry plant materials. To compost year round, you will need to gather a volume of browns roughly the size of your bin or the pile you envision (if using dry leaves this volume assumes you pack them down).

3. Layer greens with those browns.

Now you are ready to start composting! As you have kitchen scraps and fresh yard waste, put them on your pile and cover them with browns.

Layers should be 4 inches deep or less.

Recipe: 3 parts carbon to one part nitrogen

Browns [Carbon]:

- Dry leaves
- Wood chips
- Shredded paper
- Paper towel/toilet paper roll tubes
- Straw or hay
- Cardboard
- Paper bags
- Sawdust

Greens [Nitrogen]:

- Fruit & vegetable scraps
- Coffee grounds
- Tea bags
- Eggshells
- Plant scraps
- Grass clippings
- Flowers

But not:

- Whole branches, logs
- Pet or human waste
- Charcoal briquette ash
- Sawdust from treated wood
- Meat or Dairy

Optional: buy or build a container



..with an open bottom.

A loose pile will work fine too.

Troubleshooting

Symptoms	Problems	Solutions
Bad Odor	Not enough air, or too much green material	Mix the pile, and/or add in more brown material
Composts too slowly	Not enough water	Moisten and mix pile
Pile is damp and warm only in the center	Pile is too small	Collect more material and mix it into the pile
Pile is damp and sweet smelling, but not heat	Lack of green material	Mix in more green material like fresh grass clippings, yard trimmings, and weeds
Fruit flies	Too much food waste or grass clippings	Mix the pile, add in more brown material to top layer