



Guide to Backyard Composting

(It's easier than you think!)

There are many benefits to backyard composting; free and natural fertilizer, reducing yard waste, and preventing chemicals and nutrients from entering waterways are just a few. While not everything can be composted, everything that can be composted makes a difference to our landfills and environment. You can help reduce yard waste with this easy to follow backyard composting guide.

What You'll Need

- A rake
- Sun/partial sun for heat
- Access to water
- Simple container or area for compost

Composting requires heat, air, and water. All these things are very important for the bacteria to break down the organic materials into rich compost for your garden and plants.



What to put in your compost pile.

Browns: Dried leaves, branches and twigs
Greens: Grass clippings and green yard waste
Water: Essential for compost development



The smaller this yard debris is, the quicker it breaks down. Don't put plants that have diseases or chemical pesticides in your compost, as this can affect healthy plants later and kill beneficial bacteria in your compost.



What NOT to put in your compost.

Pet Waste, Food Scraps and Seeds.

Pet waste contains harmful bacteria and it smells! Food scraps can attract unwanted visitors and seeds can sprout where unwanted.

Taking care of your compost is simple

Use your rake to aerate the compost pile once a week, turning to mix layers from the top to the bottom. Moisture is important, so add some water as needed, but don't soak the pile.

Cover your compost to keep moisture in and excessive rain out. A tarp will help to trap heat which your compost needs. During the cold months, reduce aeration to a minimum to help prevent heat loss.



Extra Tips:

- 1:** Your compost pile should have equal amount of browns and greens.
- 2:** Alternate layers of organic materials of different-sized particles.
- 3:** Compost should smell earthy. If that's not the case, then something is likely wrong, and it will need to be adjusted by aeration, or removing the odorous item.
- 4:** Your compost area can be a pile on the ground, in a pit or in a bin. The key is to do what is right for your yard and lifestyle.

Composting is easy, fun and your plants will love you for your efforts!