



A top-down view of a compost pile. The pile is composed of dark, rich, moist soil. Scattered throughout the soil are various food scraps, including vegetable peels (yellow, green, and red), eggshells (orange and white), bread crumbs, and small pieces of green leafy vegetables. Some of the scraps are partially buried in the soil, while others are on the surface. The overall appearance is one of natural decomposition.

WHAT IS COMPOST?

Composting is nature's way of recycling. Composting is a natural process of decomposition of organic material into a rich soil amendment. It's a simple way to add nutrient-rich humus to your lawn or garden that fuels plant growth and restores vitality to depleted soil.

WHY SHOULD I COMPOST?

- To create a beneficial product from what is traditionally viewed as a waste
- By composting leaf and yard waste, you can create a useful soil to be incorporated into flower and vegetable gardens, used as a mulch around trees or as a top dressing on lawns
- It is beneficial to the environment
- To reduce the amount of waste that makes its way to the landfills

WHAT TO COMPOST

Carbon

Carbon-rich matter (like branches, stems, dried leaves, peels, bits of wood, bark dust or sawdust pellets, shredded brown paper bags, corn stalks, coffee filters, coffee grounds, conifer needles, egg shells, straw, peat moss, wood ash) gives compost its light, fluffy body.

Nitrogen

Nitrogen or protein-rich matter (manures, food scraps, green lawn clippings, kitchen waste, and green leaves) provides raw materials for making enzymes.

WHAT NOT TO COMPOST

- Meat, bones, or fish scraps
- Perennial weeds or diseased plants
- Pet manures
- Banana peels, peach peels, and orange rinds (may contain pesticide residues)
- Black walnut leaves
- Sawdust may be added to the compost, but with no machine oil or chain oil residues from cutting equipment
- Fatty foods, oils, dairy products
- Colored newspaper, laminated paper, pressure treated wood

HOW THE ITEMS IN YOUR COMPOST ARE LIKELY TO BE CLASSIFIED:

MATERIAL	CARBON/ NITROGEN	INFORMATION
Wood chips / pellets	Carbon	High carbon levels; use sparingly
Wood ash	Carbon	Only use ash from clean materials; sprinkle lightly
Tea leaves	Nitrogen	Loose or in bags
Fruit/ vegetable scraps	Nitrogen	Add with dry carbon items
Straw or hay	Carbon	Straw is best; hay (with seeds) is less ideal
Shrub prunings	Carbon	Woody prunings are slow to break down
Shredded paper	Carbon	Avoid using glossy paper and colored inks
Pine needles	Carbon	Acidic; use in moderate amounts
Seaweed and kelp	Nitrogen	Apply in thin layers; good source for trace minerals
Sawdust pellets	Carbon	High carbon levels; add in layers to avoid clumping
Garden plants	---	Use disease-free plants only

HOW THE ITEMS IN YOUR COMPOST ARE LIKELY TO BE CLASSIFIED:

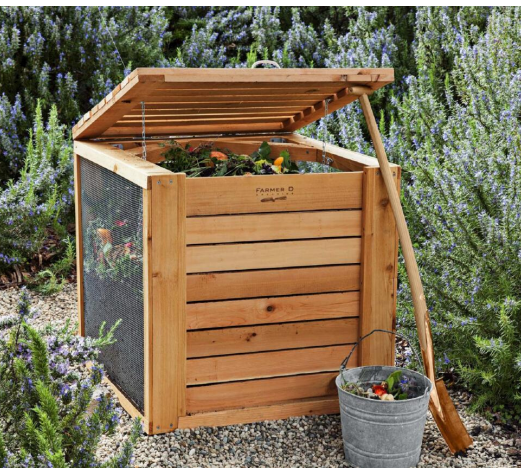
MATERIAL	CARBON/ NITROGEN	INFORMATION
Lawn & garden weeds	Nitrogen	Only use weeds which have not gone to seed
Green comfrey leaves	Nitrogen	Excellent compost 'activator'
Grass clippings	Nitrogen	Add in thin layers so they don't mat into clumps
Flowers, cuttings	Nitrogen	Chop up any long woody stems
Eggshells	Neutral	Best when crushed
Dryer lint	Carbon	Best if from natural fibers
Corn cobs, stalks	Carbon	Slow to decompose; best if chopped up
Coffee grounds	Nitrogen	Filters may also be included
Chicken manure	Nitrogen	Excellent compost 'activator'
Cardboard	Carbon	Shred material to avoid matting
Newspaper	Carbon	Avoid using glossy paper and colored inks

HOW TO COMPOST

- **Start your compost pile on bare earth.** This allows worms and other beneficial organisms to aerate the compost and be transported to your garden beds.



- **Start your compost pile on bare earth.** This allows worms and other beneficial organisms to aerate the compost and be transported to your garden beds.
- **Lay twigs or straw first**, a few inches deep. This aids drainage and helps aerate the pile.
- **Add compost materials in layers**, alternating moist and dry. Moist ingredients are food scraps, tea bags, seaweed, etc. Dry materials are straw, leaves, sawdust pellets and wood ashes. If you have wood ashes, sprinkle in thin layers, or they will clump together and be slow to break down.
- **Add manure**, green manure (clover, buckwheat, wheatgrass, grass clippings) or any nitrogen source. This activates the compost pile and speeds the process along.
- **Keep compost moist.** Water occasionally, or let rain do the job.



- **Cover** with anything you have – wood, plastic sheeting, carpet scraps. Covering helps retain moisture and heat. Covering also prevents the compost from being over-watered by rain. The compost should be moist, but not soaked and sodden.

- **Turn.** Every few weeks give the pile a quick turn with a pitchfork or shovel. This aerates the pile. Oxygen is required for the process to work, and turning “adds” oxygen.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY COMPOST?

- **Symptom:** The compost has a bad odor.
- **Problems:** Not enough air; pile too wet.
- **Solutions:** Turn it; add coarse materials such as straw, corn stalks, etc.

- **Symptom:** The center of the pile is dry.
- **Problems:** Not enough water; too much woody material.
- **Solutions:** Turn; moisten; add fresh green wastes; chop coarse wastes

- **Symptoms:** Compost is damp and warm only in the middle.
- **Problem:** Pile too small.
- **Solutions:** Get more material; mix old ingredients into a new pile.

- **Symptoms:** The pile is damp and sweet smelling, but won't heat up.
- **Problem:** Lack of nitrogen.
- **Solutions:** Mix in a nitrogen source such as food waste, fresh grass clippings, fresh manure, bloodmeal or ammonium sulfate

- **Symptoms:** Pest problems – birds, animals, rats, dogs, etc.
- **Problem:** Undesirable food wastes.
- **Solutions:** Remove any fish, meats, bones or dairy products. Be sure to cover or bury vegetable scraps.

OneStepGreener



CONTACT US

www.onestepgreener.org
info@onestepgreener.org

+91 8744901010

