

Composting is easy



Everyone with a garden should compost!



Composting turns organic household waste such as teabags or fruit and vegetable peelings into a valuable product for your garden and can reduce the amount of household waste you send to landfill by almost 33%. If you have a garden, composting is easy and takes up very little time or space.

To compost waste you need to:

1. Get a compost bin or build a compost heap
2. Install your compost bin
3. Use your compost bin

Get your compost bin

Compost bins are tidy, relatively cheap and available from your local garden centre or at a reduced cost from your local authority. Contact www.raceagainstwaste.com if you need help sourcing a compost bin in your area or for advice on building your own compost heap.



Install your compost bin

Choose the right place for your compost bin – choose a spot in your garden that is not too sunny and where the soil is free draining. This will ensure your compost will be moist but well aerated and will encourage insect activity and ultimately better compost. Locate the compost bin or heap in a position that is convenient to your house – make using it easy for yourself.

Use your compost bin

Separate your organic kitchen waste and garden waste from all other waste, put it in your compost bin and mix it with a garden fork at least once every two weeks.

Getting a balance between green and brown waste is essential. A good mix of browns and greens achieves the best balance and also helps with the aeration and amount of water in the pile. Too much of one or the other and you won't make good compost.

- 'Browns' are dry and dead plant materials such as straw, dry brown weeds, autumn leaves, and wood chips or sawdust.
- 'Greens' are fresh (and often green) plant materials such as green weeds from the garden, kitchen fruit and vegetable scraps, green leaves, coffee grounds and tea bags, fresh horse manure, etc.



Race against Waste

Use your compost bin (continued)

For best results place the 'greens' and 'browns' in alternate layers about ten inches thick. In most circumstances the compost will be ready in 2/3 months. Compost is ready when it becomes dark, crumbly and uniform in texture. Compost can be used as mulch around plants, as a top dressing over your lawn which can fertilise the soil or as a soil improver in vegetable or flower beds.



You can compost the following:

| Green | Brown |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Garden waste | Kitchen paper |
| Leaves | Sawdust and wood shavings |
| Weeds (not weed seeds) | Straw |
| Dead Plants and flowers | Paper |
| Grass and hedge cuttings | Wood |
| Branches and twigs | Twigs and branches (cut into pieces) |
| Kitchen scraps | Crushed egg shells |
| Fruit, Vegetables (cooked or uncooked) | Feathers |
| Bread, pasta and rice | |
| Tea bags and coffee | |

The following cannot be composted:

| | Why it can't be composted |
|---|---|
| Raw and cooked meat, bones | Attract pests |
| Poultry and Fish | Attract pests |
| Dairy products | Attract pests |
| Greasy oily food such as mayonnaise or butter | Attract pests and decompose slowly |
| Dog and cat litter | May contain pathogens (disease causing organisms) |
| Non-biodegradable materials (plastics, glass, metals) | Will not decompose |
| Glossy papers and magazines | The glossy coating will not decompose |
| Weed seeds | Spreads weeds |
| Diseased plant material | Danger of spreading disease to other plants |
| Garden waste recently sprayed with pesticide | Chemicals need time for thorough decomposition. |
| Sawdust and wood shavings from treated wood | Chemicals need time for thorough decomposition |
| Disposable nappies, used paper tissue | Could potentially contain pathogens (disease causing organisms) |