

Homemade Compost



Adding fertilizer or compost to the soil will give your plants the food they need to grow. You can buy fertilizer at your local gardening store or follow the instructions below to make your own, free compost at home. Big compost piles (up to about 5 ft x 5 ft x 5 ft) work best, so invite your neighbors to join you in making a compost pile.

Do Compost:

Grass and weed clippings-without pesticides
Leaves
Dead plants
Food scraps
Straw/hay
Manure
Coffee grounds

Don't Compost:

Weeds "gone to seed"
Grass sprayed with pesticides
Whole branches (chipped ok)
Meat, grease, dairy or bones
Plastic, metal or glass
Solid waste from cats or dogs
BBQ ashes

You can start a compost pile and just add material as you go!

Composting Tips:

- Make the pile close to the garden for easy transport.
- Keep the pile moist, but not soggy.
- Try to mix equal layers of "browns" (leaves, straw/hay, etc.) with "greens" (food scraps, grass clippings, etc.)
- Turn the pile now and then.
- If the pile begins to smell, turn it more often and add more "browns" such as leaves, shredded paper, or straw.
- If the pile is on the ground instead of in a bin, you may need to fence it off from animals.
- You should have a finished product in 3-6 months depending on: how often you turn the pile, and how hot the pile gets.



Information obtained from *Home Composting Made Easy*, by C. Forrest McDowell, PhD & Tricia Clark-McDowell.



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