



BACKYARD COMPOSTING

WHAT IS COMPOSTING?

Composting is the process of turning kitchen and yard waste into usable, nutrient rich soil through natural decomposition. Inside the composter, organic waste is broken down through a controlled process by micro organisms. By utilizing the correct material, these micro organisms will create a soil product that is incredibly nutrient dense and great for your garden plants.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Diverts food and yard waste from the landfill, leading to reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Creates an enriched soil which can be used in your garden
- Suppresses plant diseases and pests
- Saves you money by reducing the need for chemical fertilizer

COMPOST USE

- Amend your garden soil by working compost into it
- Sprinkle compost on your lawn to foster healthy and robust soil
- Improve the soil around trees and shrubs by spreading compost near the root zone (leave 4" clear around the trunk)

COMPOST LOCATION

- Place the composter on exposed soil in a dry, shady or moderately sunny spot that is near a source of clean water.
- Use the four provided plastic screws to secure the composter to the ground.
- Make sure it's convenient to get to the composter, as you'll be taking your food waste out often.

FOOD WASTE PER YEAR



The average American family of 4 loses **\$150 per month** on wasted food. To learn how to prevent food waste visit

orlando.gov/stopfoodwaste

AT LEAST **1/3** of everything in landfills could have been composted



3 STEPS FOR COMPOSTING



PREPARATION

- Chop, shred or tear items into smaller pieces. This will help speed up the decomposition process.
- Line your container with newspaper to soak up liquids. When you empty the bin into the composter the newspaper can go along with it.
- Empty the contents of your container into your composter.

MAINTENANCE

- Cover fresh food waste with a layer of leaves, other dry yard trimmings, or soil.
- Add water until your compost is the moisture of a wrung-out sponge.
- Periodically stir the container to aerate the compost and encourage decomposition.

HARVEST

- Compost can be harvested after about 4 to 6 months. You'll know it's ready when the soil is a crumbly moist texture and gives off an earthy aroma.
- For small harvesting, use the harvest door at the base of the composter.
- For large harvesting, unscrew the anchoring screws and remove the container. Place any large food scraps back in the composter for the next cycle.

WHAT CAN I COMPOST?

Composting requires a mix of nitrogen and carbon to create the proper setting for decomposition. Green waste such as food scraps, bring nitrogen whereas brown waste, leaves and paper products, add carbon to the mix.

GREEN

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Crushed egg shells
- Coffee grounds
- Filters
- Grass clippings
- House plants

BROWN

- Shredded cardboard
- Nuts
- Shells
- Bread
- Grains
- Shredded black and white newspaper
- Yard trimmings
- Leaves
- Hay
- Straw
- Wood chips
- Shredded cotton & wool rags
- Hair
- Fur

"NO" LIST

- Meat
- Bones,
- Fats
- Grease
- Lard
- Oils
- Dairy (butter, milk, eggs)
- Diseased plants
- Charcoal ashes
- Toxic materials
- Non-compostable materials
- Cat or dog waste
- Litter

TROUBLESHOOT YOUR PILE

PROBLEM	CAUSE	SOLUTION
Rotten egg smell	Insufficient air or too much moisture	Turn pile and incorporate coarse browns (sawdust, leaves)
Ammonia smell	Too much nitrogen	Incorporate coarse browns
Pile does not heat up or decomposes slowly	Pile too small	Add more organic matter
	insufficient moisture	Turn pile and add water
	Lack of nitrogen	Incorporate food waste
	Not enough air	Turn pile
	Cold weather	Increase pile size or insulate