

What is compost?

Compost is a mixture of dead or decaying organic material that is used to fertilize dirt. It adds important nutrients and to the earth so it will grow healthier and stronger fruit and vegetables, flowers, plants and trees.

Why is composting important?

Composting is a great way to reduce the amount of rubbish that we produce. It is a way of recycling old food scraps like vegetable peelings and garden waste such as dead flowers and lawn trimmings. The amount of rubbish we produce has been increasing every year. Composting is an important step we can take to keep the planet healthier and make our gardens more beautiful at the same time.

How does composting work?

Composting is easy and you don't have to have a big garden to do it. It doesn't matter whether you live in a small flat or a large country house. Here's how to get started:

Find a space to compost

If you have a large garden you can set aside a small place in the back corner to start your compost pile. You can either make a small bin out of wood and chicken wire or simply leave it uncovered. If you live in a flat or you have neighbors living close-by, you can put it in a covered bin that you can buy or make yourself.

What you will need

To make the best compost you will need both "green" and "brown" waste. Here are some examples of each type of waste.

GREEN WASTE: This waste is usually wet. It contains nitrogen which is one of two important elements needed in composting.

- ✿ Grass clippings, vegetable peelings, coffee grounds, banana peels, tea bags etc

BROWN WASTE: This waste is usually drier. It contains the carbon you need for your compost to work.

- ✿ Dead leaves, wood chips, hay, dried grass, shredded newspaper (not glossy magazines)

What you won't need

It's very important not to use any of the following items in your compost because it can make the compost smell bad; hurt the new plants you'll want to grow or attract animals:

- ✿ Meat, eggs, milk, bones, animal products, animal waste or chemicals

Make your compost!

- 1) Place your green and brown waste in a pile and add some regular dirt. You can add some worms if you like to help break down the waste faster.
- 2) You want to keep your compost moist, but not soaking wet. You can add a bit of water and turn it over with a shovel or rake to mix it. Try to mix the compost every few days.

When will the compost be ready to add to my garden?

Depending on how often you add waste to the pile and how often you water and turn it, your compost will be ready in a few weeks or a few months. When it looks like rich, dark coloured dirt you can add it to the regular dirt in your garden. Your new plants will be glad you did!



Acknowledgement to <http://www.compassionatekids.com/activities/compost.pdf>