

<https://www.twp.woodbridge.nj.us/878/Compost>

Compost



HOW TO COMPOST

Composting is the combining and managing of specific waste materials so that they decompose. Once the materials are mixed together, microbes in the soil will start to breakdown the waste and turn it into the nutrient-rich material that helps plants grow. By composting, you are not only creating something that helps keep plants healthy, but you are keeping compostable waste products like food scraps and yard waste out of landfills.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Brown material to produce carbon:

Dead leaves, branches and twigs, sawdust or wood chips, coffee filters, cotton and wool rags, shredded pieces of paper, cardboard or newspaper and shredded nut shells.



Green material to produce nitrogen:

Grass clippings and leaves, fruit and vegetable scraps, hair, lint, tea and coffee grounds



Water



1 Select a dry, shady spot near a water source.

Ideal size for your compost area is 3 feet wide by 3 feet deep by 3 feet tall (1 cubic yard). You can buy a bin, use chicken wire, or just isolate an area of ground for your compost heap.



2 Add brown and green material in alternate layers.

Try and keep the ratio roughly 3 parts browns to 1 part greens. Make sure larger pieces of material are chopped or shredded.



3 Keep the compost moist [but not too wet].

Moisture helps with the breakdown of organic matter.



4 Occasionally turn your compost mixture to provide aeration.

This helps speed up the composting process and keeps things airy, which cuts the risk of things getting smelly.



5 As materials breakdown, the pile will get warm.

There might even be steam. Don't be alarmed. That means it's working. Now you just have to wait.

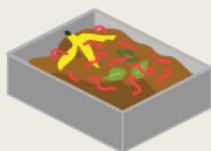


6 All done!

When material is dark with no remnants of food or waste, your compost is ready. Add it to lawns and gardens or anywhere that could benefit from some good soil.

WHAT NOT TO COMPOST

Metal, glass, and other products that do not easily breakdown, coal or charcoal ash, diseased or insect-ridden plants, black walnut tree leaves and twigs, pet waste, bones, meat, fats, oils dairy products and eggs (egg shells are OK), and yard trimmings treated with chemical pesticides.



What's vermicomposting?

Vermicomposting is a type of composting that uses red wiggler earthworms (*Eisenia fetida*) to break down organic material. Place worms in a container 8-16 inches deep, layered with dirt, newspaper, and leaves. Make sure the bin has small holes at the bottom (a quarter inch or smaller) to allow for ventilation and drainage. Fruit and vegetable waste will eventually be replaced with nutrient-rich excrement. This method requires far less space, so it's a good alternative for people who don't have enough room or the ideal conditions for a large compost pile.



BACKYARD COMPOST BINS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

The Middlesex County Division of Solid Waste Management is pleased to make compost bins available to Middlesex County residents at discounted prices.

Why compost?

- Benefit your soil and plants
- Save money on fertilizer and other soil amendments
- Help the environment by reducing the amount of garbage going to the landfill

Compost bins can be purchased from

Middlesex County Dept. of Public Safety & Health

Division of Solid Waste Management
13-15 Kennedy Boulevard
East Brunswick, NJ 08816
Wednesdays from 11am-2pm and
Fridays from 9am-12pm

Payment can be made by credit card, cash or check made out to: Treasurer, County of Middlesex.

For more information call or email:

732-745-4170 | Send an email to sign up
solidwaste@co.middlesex.nj.us | for monthly reminders.



Geobin

(for yard trimmings)
20 cubic foot capacity
30" high X 36" wide at base

\$20



Soil Saver

(for kitchen scraps and yard trimmings)
11.4 cubic foot capacity
32" high X 28" wide X 28" long

\$40



Wiggly Wrench

Vermicomposter
for indoor use (worms not included)

\$50

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CUT IT & LEAVE IT!

Grasscycling: Don't bag your grass clippings. Leave them on the lawn!

Rules of Thumb:

- **Don't** cut more than one third of the grass blade
- **Mow** only when the grass is dry
- **Never** mow during a drought
- **Use** any kind of mower, but make sure it has a sharp blade.
- **Prevent** excessive grass growth by watering (and fertilizing) in moderation
- **Cut** regularly. If grass is long, cut off short amounts in several mowings rather than all at once. Cutting too short and not often enough are common errors of lawn care.

REMEMBER, Grasscycling will give you better soil which means a better lawn, save you time, and leave us with more space in our landfills for things that we can't recycle!



RECYCLE the natural way:

Cut and leave your grass clippings on the lawn.

SAVE cleanup time

REDUCES waste

SAVES money on fertilizer use

CREATES a healthier and greener lawn

