



HOW TO MAKE PERFECT COMPOST

Composting is so easy and has many benefits – for the planet and your pocket.

By creating and using your compost heap, you will be improving the soil quality in your garden by adding nutrient rich ingredients.

By encouraging the aerobic breakdown of organic materials, you are helping to prevent greenhouse gas emissions as well as saving valuable landfill space.

You will save money by having a more productive garden with less reliance on store bought fertilizers that end up washed into our streams and rivers through storm water drains.

IT'S AS EASY AS 1, 2, 3



1. The first step is to choose whether to use a container (and if so, which one) or just a heap. Containers can be anything – old garbage bins, wooden boxes, anything that allows you to have drainage holes to ensure your compost doesn't become too wet. Most councils have affordable compost bins for sale and you can buy some pretty fancy ones at hardware stores if you don't want to make your own.

If you plan on just a mound, ensure you have some hessian or similar to cover it with. This helps discourage unwelcome visitors to make the heap their home.

2. Once you have decided what kind of compost heap to have, you need to decide where to place it. If possible, keep out of direct sun as this will make it dry out quickly.
3. The final step is to add the ingredients. It's a good idea to start with some heavier garden cuttings, for example hedge trimmings and small branches, to give your heap a base.

Follow this with a layer of green ingredients (see list below) which add nitrogen to your heap and oxidise the carbon. Then add a layer of brown ingredients (see list below) – this is the carbon layer and helps ensure your heap is composting, rather than rotting, by creating heat to enhance the breakdown process. If the heap becomes too wet, with too much green material breaking down, it will become smelly and soggy. On the other hand, if it is too dry, the ingredients will take too long to break down, so it is sometimes necessary to water your heap – but not too much!

The final ingredient is oxygen, to prevent greenhouse gasses from being produced. The easiest way to achieve this is to use a garden fork to turn your compost. It's a good idea to have air holes and the sides and top of your container, if you are using one.

Continue layering your heap and turning regularly. Depending on your mix, the compost should be ready to use in six weeks, to six months. When your ingredients have broken down to a soil like substance, add it to your garden beds and water in, then wait to watch the garden magic happen.

COMPOST INGREDIENTS

GREEN INGREDIENTS

Kitchen scraps, vegetable cuttings,
egg shells

Lawn clippings

Tea leaves and bags

Coffee grounds

Human and pet hair

Vacuum cleaner and dryer fluff

Dead flowers

Ashes

BROWN INGREDIENTS

Leaves

Small twigs

Hedge clippings

Straw

Sawdust (non-treated timber)

Bark

Wet newspapers

Old potting mix

WHAT NOT TO ADD TO YOUR COMPOST

- Meat scraps and fats– these will attract rodents and will rot and leave your heap smelling.
- Bread and cakes or dairy products – these will attract unwanted visitors and smells
- Metal
- Plastic
- Sawdust from treated timber
- Animal manure – especially from dogs and cats
- Noxious weeds



