

Your Step-by-Step Guide to Making Compost That Will Enrich Your Garden

<https://www.bhg.com/gardening/yard/compost/how-to-compost/>



(Image from Etsy)

Some common misconceptions of home composting are that it's too complicated, it'll smell funny, and it's messy. These are all true if you compost the wrong way. Luckily, composting the right way is quite simple: Just layer organic materials and a dash of soil to create a concoction that turns into humus (the best soil booster around!). You can then improve your flower garden with compost, top dress your lawn, feed your growing veggies, and more. Once you get your compost pile started, you'll find that it's an easy way to repurpose kitchen scraps and other organic materials into something that can help keep your plants thriving.

What to Compost

Composting is a great way to use the things in your refrigerator that are a little past their prime, therefore eliminating waste. Keeping a container in your kitchen, like this white ceramic compost bucket (\$20, World Market), is an easy way to accumulate your composting materials. If you don't want to buy one, you can make your own indoor or outdoor compost bin. Collect these materials to start off your compost pile right:

- Fruit scraps
- Vegetable scraps
- Coffee grounds
- Eggshells (though they can take a while to break down)
- Grass and plant clippings
- Dry leaves
- Finely chopped wood and bark chips
- Shredded newspaper
- Straw
- Sawdust from untreated wood

Test Garden Tip: Think twice before adding citrus peels, onions, and garlic to your homemade compost pile. It is believed that these materials repel earthworms, which are a vital part of your garden. (I have not found this to be a problem and compost all fresh produce, however acidic soil is not the best for most plants, learn about soil ph, and key components of healthy soil: nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, micro nutrients, and pro-biotics, much of which comes from our produce scraps)



(images from Pixaby)

What NOT to Compost

Not only will these items cause problems in your garden, but they also can make your compost smell bad and attract animals and pests. Avoid these items for a successful compost pile:

- Anything containing meat, oil, fat, or grease
- Diseased plant materials
- Sawdust or chips from pressure-treated wood
- Dog or cat feces
- Weeds that go to seed
- Dairy products

I personally start with 2-3 bags of Organic fertilizer, which contains no animal waste. To this add daily/weekly kitchen produce scraps, garden clippings (no weeds), leaves and natural mulch ...

We do have chickens and have had goats and alpacas, we and will add the straw and barn yard debris as well. The Key is to keep it moist, and turn it often. Cover with a tarp in the heat so it doesn't dry out. Have two piles going, one you add to, one you turn and use.



Compost Drum from Lowes

Organic Seeds and starter plants:

- **Seeds should be part of our Years Supply!** See the Church guidelines for Self Sufficiency and Provident Living <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/gardening?lang=eng>
- **Organics Seeds will produce Fruits and Vegetables with seeds that can reproduce ...**
- **Saving seeds from your own organic produce will ensure that the plants are tolerant to our region ...**
- **Creating our own nutrient rich Compost and organic Seed Bank will help us be more Self Sufficient!**
- **Organic Gardening reduces the need for chemicals, bug repellants, and animal based fertilizers ...**
- **Do not buy from companies that have both organic or non-organic (GMO) seeds...**

Local in Mt Shasta CA; Berryvale and the seasonal Pop-up across the street in front of Shasta Base Camp. Also, most of the local garden stores carry Organic plants and seeds

<https://mountainroseherbs.com/>

<https://www.mountainvalleygrowers.com/>

<https://www.naturespath.com/en-us/blog/14-best-seed-companies-plant-organic-garden/>

<https://www.motherearthnews.com/organic-gardening/8-steps-to-make-better-garden-soil-zmaz07jjzsel>