

HOME COMPOSTING

Home composting is a great way to transform your food and garden waste into nutrient rich food for your garden.

The composting process is simply the breakdown of organic matter by living organisms - bacteria, fungi, worms, insects and other small creatures. Like us they need food, air and water.

Food - this is the material you put in the compost bin.

Air - composting needs plenty of air. You can let air in by turning over the compost with a garden fork but a good mixture of material should make sure there are lots of air spaces in it.

Water - but not too much or too little! The right mixture should make sure it's just right but if it's too wet then add some more 'brown' material or if it's too dry then add more 'greens' or water with a watering can.

Keep adding compostable material bit by bit as it becomes available.



BROWN Materials

Dry leaves



Wood chips
and twigs



Cardboard kitchen/
toilet roll tubes and
eggboxes



Shredded
paper



Sawdust and
wood shavings



Straw/hay/Herbivorous
pet (rabbits, hamsters,
guinea pigs) bedding



WHAT TO COMPOST

Like any recipe, your compost relies on the right ingredients to make it work. The key to good compost lies in getting the mix of 'brown and green' materials right.

GREEN Materials

Grass Cuttings



Plant prunings



Young weeds (that
have not seeded)



Dead flowerheads



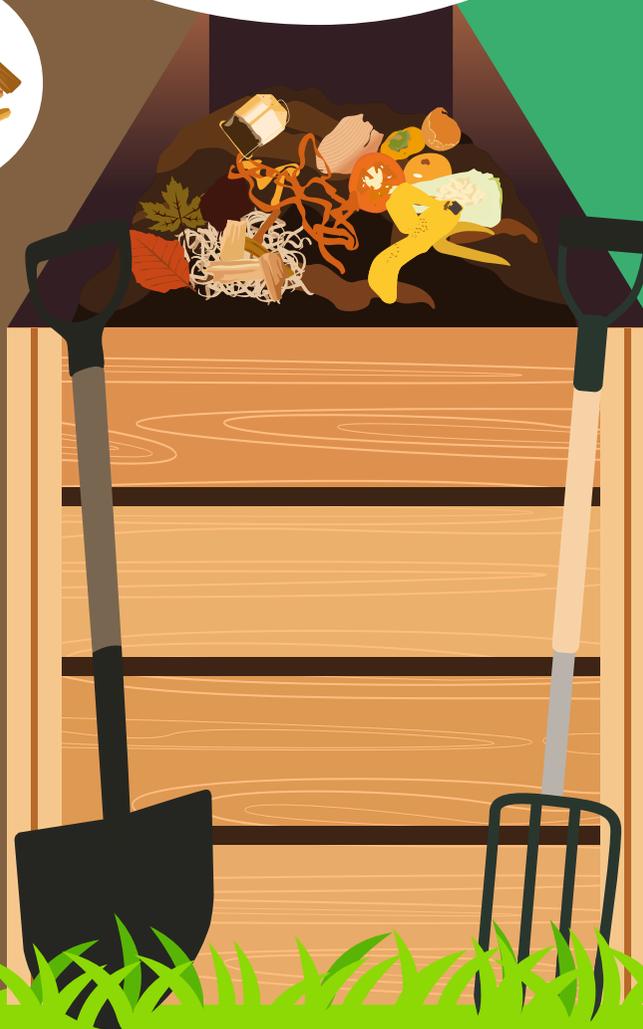
Raw fruit and veg peelings



Coffee grounds
and tea bags



Houseplants and
cut flowers



What not to compost

The following must not be put into compost:

- ✗ Meat, fish and all cooked food
- ✗ Bread
- ✗ Cheese
- ✗ Oil and fat
- ✗ Cat litter and dog poo
- ✗ Nappies
- ✗ Coal ash
- ✗ Weeds with seeds
- ✗ Diseased plants and
- ✗ Any type of plastic including food wrapping should not be composted.

Step by step guide



1 Getting started

You can use a bin or a simple heap on the ground to start your compost heap, but a bin helps to keep your compost neat and manageable.

It should have a lid or top to keep heat in and water out and it should be easy to access (near where you grow) in a sunny or partly shaded spot on soil or grass.



2 Add the right ingredients

Use a mixture of green materials and brown materials and remember not to add too much water.



3 Add air

Turning it over makes sure lots of air gets in, which speeds up the composting.





4 Wait a while

It can take between 12 and 18 months to make mature compost depending on the mixture of material and how often you turn it over.



6 Where do I use it?

You can spread it round the bottom of existing plants as a mulch. Dig it into the soil where you are going to plant things or mix it with soil to use as a potting mix to grow your seeds.



5 Ready for use

Check the compost at the bottom of the bin. When it's dark and crumbly with an earthy smell it's ready to use.

Any material from the top layers that hasn't finished composting can be put back in the bin. It helps if you have more than one bin so when one is full you can start another - when that's full the compost from the first should be ready.

Find out more

For more information on home composting visit gardenorganic.org.uk/compost

For more information about garden waste visit aberdeencity.gov.uk/gardenwaste

