

# Composting tips



## 1. The pile

Make the compost pile, bin, heap, or whatever you choose to use, at least three feet wide and tall, four or five feet is even better. The compost should be in contact with the ground so that worms and micro-organisms can get to it.

## 2. 2 parts brown to 1 part green by volume

Mix roughly 2 buckets dry (carbon-rich material like wood chips, dried leaves, twigs) to 1 bucket wet (nitrogen-rich material like grass clippings, kitchen waste, green debris). Mix or layer these two types of debris.

## 3. Compost no-no's

Never add meat, fish, dairy, oily, greasy foods. Avoid plants contaminated with pesticides. Broken up egg shells are okay but not eggs. Be careful with weeds and diseased plants. Many weed seeds and diseases are destroyed if the compost gets hot enough, although some are very resistant.

## 4. Brown on top

Top off with brown material to cut down on flies.

## 5. Moist

Moisten the pile if it gets too dry. This will hasten decomposition. Ants or rats are an indication that the pile is too dry.

## 6. But not soggy

Do not allow the pile to be too wet. Soggy compost attracts flies and can go anaerobic (smelly). Cover with a tarp during long rainy periods.

## 7. Keep it aerated

Turn pile to aerate it and speed decomposition. Turning is hard work and not essential as long as the debris does not compress and become anaerobic. Add lots of brown and less green on top, remove decomposed mulch from the bottom.

## 8. Too many twigs

If your yard generates too much brown waste (twigs, branches) chip them for faster decomposition.

## 9. Too much grass

If you have too much green waste (grass clippings) spread them thinly in garden beds, or leave them on the lawn where they will decompose quickly ... or get rid of more lawn.

## 10. Don't fight nature

Compost happens. Don't work too hard at it.