



Composting- It's Easy!

Composting is easy, inexpensive and wonderful for your garden. By composting you will reduce your waste at home while creating a healthy growing environment.

Simple Rules: To compost you need air, water, carbon and nitrogen. Carbon comes from woody, brown things. Nitrogen comes from soft, green material. The rule of thumb is you need 2 parts nitrogen waste to 1 part carbon waste. □□

What: For your nitrogen rich green material, use plant matter like grass clippings and non-animal kitchen scraps, such as vegetables, fruits, teabags and coffee grounds. For your woody brown carbon rich matter use old plants, hedge clippings, used coffee filters, shredded paper and leaves. If you add your entire leaf collection in fall to your compost pile, it will throw off your ratios. Add just a portion of your leaf collection or follow the practices (and success!) of one Rye Garden Club member: Add all your leaves to the compost, but supplement the nitrogen in the collection by frequently adding to the pile the organic fertilizer Milorganite. Do not add sticks to your pile as they take too long to break down. □ You may add egg shells, but as a rule do not add any proteins or fats to your compost. If you have a pet, only herbivores are allowed to contribute to your pile! The waste from birds, guinea pigs and rabbits are rich in nutrients. Do not add weeds to your compost or you will be spreading their seeds later on. □□

How: Collect your kitchen waste for composting in a lidded container on your counter top. Kitchen compost crocks and bins can be found online, but you can use any container with a tight top. Another idea is to collect your scraps in a bag or container in your freezer. When your container is full, add it to your pile. To speed up the breakdown, you could put your scraps in the blender before adding them to the collection. □ For your compost outside, you can create a pile and confine it with fencing. You will need to stir it with a garden fork occasionally and keep an eye on it to see when it needs water. The general rule is that when you can't recognize the matter in the pile, you have good compost and are good to go. An open pile will take months to break down. □ A faster way to compost is to buy a compost tumbler. These are easily found online in a variety of sizes. The compost tumbler is covered and can be turned. The tumbler collects separately the liquid formed from composting known as "compost tea." This nutrient-rich tea is a terrific fertilizer you can add when you water your plantings. □□

Where: Make sure your compost pile or tumbler is easily accessible so you will use it! A sunny or semi-shaded spot is recommended for an exposed pile. Put it directly on the ground and keep it far from waterways or low-lying areas that are prone to flooding. □

Contrary to popular belief, composting is not a smelly experience. Also, as long as you keep proteins out of your compost, animals will not be attracted to it.

Brought to you by the Conservation Committee of the Rye Garden Club