

# Composting 101

## Steps

### 1 Find an ideal spot

Find a spot that is easy for you to access throughout the year. You want an area with good drainage

### 2 Build your pile

Add your materials. You want to add browns and greens in a ratio of

**3:1**

### 3 Wait

You can speed up the process by mixing, keeping your pile moist, or covering your pile

### 4 Harvest

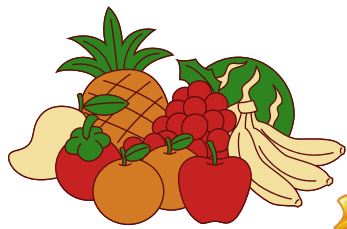
The bottom and center of the pile will be ready to go in 6-18 months, depending on how much work you put in

4

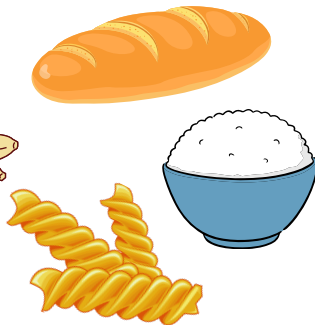
### Tips

- Make sure your bin is getting enough air - try to have holes/slits on the top, sides, and bottom
- Cutting up food scraps before adding them to the pile will speed up decomposition
- If you love compost, consider having two piles - one that's ready and one that's working

## Fresh Greens



Vegetable scraps, fruit waste, peels, corn husks



Bread, rice, pasta, grains



Coffee grounds, paper coffee filters, tea bags/leaves



Garden waste, clover, grass clippings and any other plant waste

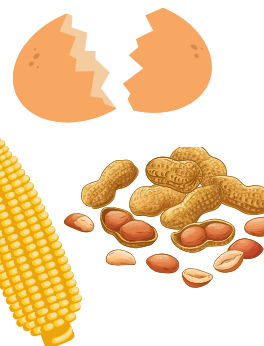
## Dry Browns



Leaves, straw/hay, Pine needles, Old potting soil, Peat moss



Paper (shredded, no gloss or craft paper), cardboard, newspaper



Eggshells, nutshells, corn cobs



Twigs, sawdust, woodchips

## Avoid



Meat, bones, dairy products, oils, grease, peanut butter, cooked foods, sauces, pet waste, plastics, diseased plants, weeds with seeds

# Types of Composting

1. Hot: Create an outdoor pile or bin. Layer Browns and Greens carefully in 3:1 ratio. Keep moist and mix
2. Cold: Create an outdoor pile or bin. Add browns and greens in any ratio and let nature work
3. Vermi: Add browns, greens, and red wiggler worms to bin. Provide lots of bedding on bottom and top of the bin. Feed in small amounts every 1-2 weeks.
4. Grasscycling: Leave grass clippings on your lawn instead of collecting them. Clippings will settle into the yard in a few hours and begin decomposing (tip - mow your lawn often and don't cut too short)

# Troubleshooting

SYMPTOM	PROBLEM	SOLUTION
Compost has a bad odor	Not enough air; pile too wet	Turn it; add coarse dry stalks, straw, or wood chips.
Piles is dry throughout.	Not enough water; too much woody material	Turn pile and moisten; cover pile; add fresh green material.
Pile is damp but woody and not composting	Lack of nitrogen.	Turn it and mix in a nitrogen source like fresh grass

# Harvesting

Compost is ready to use when the finished product is a rich dark brown color, smells like earth, and crumbles in your hand. Finished compost can be used as a soil amendment or mulch

Soil Amendment: Mix in 2-4" of compost to the top 6-9" of your soil

Mulch: Loosen the top 2-3" of soil and add 3" of compost on the surface, a few inches away from plant stems

# Alternatives

If you can't compost, or would like to compost additional items unsuitable for household compost:

## GoZERO

Free for Residents:  
City of Wyoming  
Colerain Township  
Village of Mariemont



Member supported options across Cincinnati



## Queen City Commons

Member supported:  
\$5-\$15 per month

## Compost Now

Member supported:  
Weekly/Biweekly pickup service, or drop off  
\$19-\$39 per month



# A Guide to Composting



What can be composted

Steps to composting

Types of Composting

Troubleshooting

Alternatives

