

# Making Compost at Home: It's Easier than You Think

## What You Need

- a out-of-the way, shady place for the compost piles
- brown material to provide carbon
- green material to provide nitrogen
- a leaf rake

### DO USE

**Brown material: fallen leaves**

**Green material: kitchen refuse,  
grass clippings, garden debris**

### DON'T USE

**Animal products (skin, bones, dairy)**

**Dog or cat feces**

**Diseased plant material**

**Weeds that have gone to seed**

The following tools are helpful but not absolutely necessary:

- a pitchfork
- a piece of 1/2" screening attached to a frame

## What You Do

- Mark out two rectangles roughly 3' x 6'. Those are your "bins." You may also build or purchase a composting bin.
- Begin building your first pile by spreading a layer (2-3") of leaves on the bottom of one of the rectangles.
- Add a thin layer (1-2") of green material, then add another brown layer. Always add more brown than green material.
- When the pile is about 3' tall, add a final layer of leaves. Leave the pile to cook and begin a second pile.
- Optional: use a pitchfork to stir the compost once a week to speed up decomposition

### Accumulating Brown Material

Save your fallen leaves each year and use them throughout the year.

### Accumulating Green Material

Keep a closed on the kitchen counter for kitchen scraps; add the material to the compost frequently.

### Using the Finished Compost

The compost is done when the pile is uniformly dark in color, it smells like good, clean earth, and you can see very few identifiable objects in it. There's no need to dig it into the soil. Place it on top, and the earthworms and other soil critters will mix it in.

### Optional: Screening the Compost

Place the screen over a container, put a shovelful of compost on it, and, wearing gloves, push the compost through the holes in the screen. Large objects will remain.

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