OhioEPA

COMPOSTING
Recycle the Natural Way

Compost can be made in just two or three weeks during the summer if the leaves and other materials are finely ground or shredded, turned frequently to provide good aeration and supplied with sufficient moisture and nitrogen.

The usual method, however, is to turn the pile once a week for two or three weeks, then once a month until the compost is ready to use.

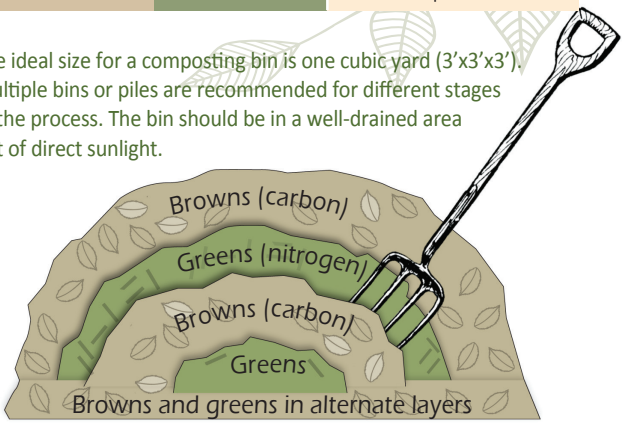
After you build a compost pile, nature does most of the work. Your job is to bring the raw materials together in a way that promotes decomposition.

Successful composting requires four things:

1. **Organic matter**, such as leaves, grass clippings, garden plants, kitchen scraps and shredded paper.
2. **Soil organisms**, such as bacteria, fungi and other decomposers.
3. **Water**.
4. **Oxygen**.

WHAT TO ADD		WHAT NOT TO ADD
Browns (carbon)	**Greens (nitrogen)**	
• Cotton or wool rags • Dryer and vacuum cleaner lint • Eggshells • Nut shells • Fireplace ashes (from wood burning) • Sawdust • Hay and straw • Yard trimmings (for example, leaves, branches, twigs) • Houseplants • Used potting soil • Wood chips • Shredded newspaper • Cardboard rolls • Clean paper	• Uncooked or cooked fruits and vegetables • Bread and grains • Coffee grounds and filters • Grass clippings • Paper tea bags • Hair and fur • Chicken, rabbit, cow, horse manure	• Aluminum, tin or other metal • Glass • Dairy products (for example, butter, milk, sour cream, yogurt) and eggs • Fats, grease, lard or oils • Greasy or oily foods • Meat or seafood scraps • Pet wastes (for example, dog or cat feces, soiled cat litter) • Soiled diapers • Plastic • Stickers from fruits or vegetables (to prevent litter) • Black walnut tree leaves or twigs • Yard trimmings treated with chemical pesticides • Roots of perennial weeds • Coal or charcoal ash • Firestarter logs • Treated or painted wood

The ideal size for a composting bin is one cubic yard (3'x3'x3'). Multiple bins or piles are recommended for different stages of the process. The bin should be in a well-drained area out of direct sunlight.



To find out what composting options are available in your area, contact your local solid waste management district, health department or Ohio EPA office.

epa.ohio.gov/dmwm/Home/Composting.aspx