

CAN YOU DIG IT!



The Basics on Creating Great Compost

Healthy compost is one of the best things you can add to your garden, and making it is easy once you understand how it all works!



Top 3 reasons compost is great for your soil

1. Healthy soil is alive with the same organisms that live in healthy compost. Adding healthy compost to your garden soil will add billions of beneficial microbes to help your plants grow organically!
2. Adding compost makes your soil better able to absorb water and then release it when your plants need it.
3. Compost holds onto nutrients in the soil and prevents them from washing away when it rains and when you water.

How to make healthy compost

1. The compost organisms need a balance of carbon and nitrogen to thrive. Carbon rich (BROWN) materials include: dead leaves, straw, ripped up newspaper and cardboard. Nitrogen rich (GREEN) materials include: garden scraps, fruit and veggie scraps, fresh grass clippings and coffee grounds.
2. Compost organisms need to breathe! If your pile is too wet and soggy, there won't be enough air and the beneficial organisms will die (and the stinky organisms will thrive!). Use an aeration tool or a long stick to poke holes deep into your compost pile, every week or two.
3. Compost piles should smell fresh, not stinky. If you smell rotting vegetables, your pile needs air and more carbon rich materials. Quick fix: rip up a whole newspaper into long strips and mix it well with your stinky compost.

Compost Containers

Whether you garden in your backyard with a few friends or in a large community garden, there are composters to fit every situation.

A large 3 bins system is often used in community gardens, as well as the basic backyard composter that you can purchase in most municipalities. For small spaces and apartments, worm composters are a great fit.

For the most amazing display of all the different composter options, visit the City Farmer Demonstration Garden at 2150 Maple St. in Vancouver or give them a call (604) 736-2250!



Aeration tool

www.cydi.ca
info@cydi.ca

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Creating Great Compost

A handy rule of thumb to ensure you are adding enough carbon is to add EQUAL volumes of GREENS and BROWNS. If you fill a bucket full of kitchen scraps, add another equal bucket of leaves or low-quality household papers at the same time.

Green Material (Nitrogen) you can add to your compost pile

- Garden scraps cut into small pieces, and no invasive weeds or diseased plants
- Fruits or veggies
- Cooked fruits or veggies without fats or dairy
- Rotten or moldy veggies and fruits
- Tea leaves along with the bags and strings
- Coffee grounds and filters
- Crushed egg shells
- Grass clippings, not too much



Brown Material (Carbon) you can add to your compost pile

- Fallen leaves wet or dry
- Newspaper torn into 1-2" strips and crumpled
- Cardboard, paper bags, toilet paper rolls, cardboard egg cartons, paper coffee cups, take-out boxes, all torn into hand-sized pieces
- Paper towels, napkins, and tissue paper (wrapping or Kleenex-type)
- Wooden stir sticks, toothpicks, skewers

DO NOT Compost!

- Invasive weeds and diseased plants
- Paper towels with antibacterial cleaner on them
- Bread, toast, crackers, chips
- Pasta, grains or grain meals
- Grease or fats
- Meat or fish flesh, trimmings, bones, carcasses
- Dairy or soy products (cheese, yogurt, milk)
- Barbeque ash, charcoal briquettes (because of the chemicals in them)
- Dog or cat feces or soiled kitty litter

Pest problem?

A healthy, fresh smelling compost is much less likely to attract pests, such as rats and raccoons. Burying fresh food scraps deep into the compost and not leaving them exposed on the top will help. Finally, if pests are a real problem in your area, don't compost your kitchen scrap.

More information on composting! The North Shore Recycling Program website has lot of easy to read and relevant information: www.nsrp.bc.ca/composting

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