

## BENEFITS OF COMPOSTING

- A fun individual, family, or community activity.
- Reduce waste (34% of the waste stream is yard and food waste) and methane gas, a powerful greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change.
- Improve soil and garden health.

# MAKE YOUR OWN COMPOST!



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## 1 CHOOSE A METHOD AND A LOCATION



## 6 IS IT DONE?

Signs that your compost is done and ready for harvesting:

- Dark chocolatey brown
- Crumbly feel
- Earthy smell
- Material fairly small

Separate any remaining large material such as large pieces of wood with a screen.

## 7 USE IT AS

- Soil conditioner
- Top dressing
- Mulch
- Potting mixture

## 4 COMPOST CRITTERS

Common critters that break down organic material:

- Pill bug
- Centipede
- Ant
- Fungi
- Mold
- Earthworm
- Fruit fly
- Slug
- Beetle
- Spider

## 5 TROUBLESHOOTING

### Bad odor

Reason: Too much moisture

Solution: Turn the pile and add dry porous material

### Pile Will Not Heat Up

Reason: Pile is too dry and/or lack of "greens"

Solution: Add water and/or "greens" and turn the pile.

## BUILD A PILE

Build a pile of 60% "browns" to 40% "greens" in alternating layers. Chop larger materials into smaller pieces.

### BROWNS (CARBON)

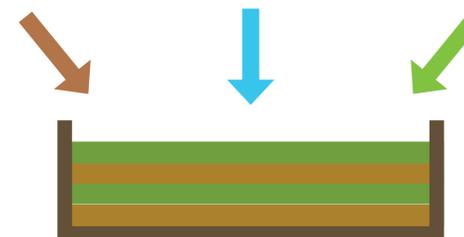
- Dried plant material
- Paper towels, napkins, and plates
- Newspaper
- Wood ash
- Untreated sawdust

### WATER

- Add water as you build the pile.
- Keep as moist as a wrung-out sponge.

### GREENS (NITROGEN)

- Grass clippings
- Coffee grounds
- Vegetables
- Herbivore manure
- Fruit
- Grains



## 3 PILE MAINTENANCE

- The pile needs oxygen. Turn the material from the outer edges to the center where it will be the hottest.
- Add water as needed so it is as wet as a wrung-out sponge.
- Use a compost thermometer to check the temperature of the pile. When the center of the pile reaches 150° F, turn it! If you don't have a thermometer, turn the pile 2-4 days after you build it and occasionally thereafter.

