

Home composting is the most environmentally-friendly way of dealing with kitchen and garden waste, plus it produces compost that can be used as an excellent soil improver.

There are so many benefits to composting.

Composting increases the quality of the soil by increasing the amount of organic materials and micronutrients.

Many of the micronutrients in compost have a pesticide-like effect on garden pests. In turn, composting reduces our dependence on harmful chemical pesticides.

Composting attracts many kinds of worms, bacterias, birds, fungi and insects that are beneficial to the crop growing process.

Compost also helps to reduce soil erosion by aiding the soil's ability to hold water. Erosion leads to nutrient deficient soil and polluted water sources.

Let's not waste it!



Composting Steps: Why not try it in your garden?

1



Start with a layer of coarse materials. Twigs or small branches are good. This allows airflow to circulate around the pile. Create alternating layers of green, nitrogen rich materials with brown, carbon rich materials. "Green" materials include kitchen scraps and fresh plant and grass trimmings. "Brown" materials include dried plant materials, cardboard and newspaper.

2



Continue building layer by layer until you have used all your initial materials. For best results, start building your compost pile by mixing three parts brown with one part green material. If your compost pile looks too wet and smells, add more brown items or aerate more often. If you see it looks extremely brown and dry, add green items and water to make it slightly moist.

3



Sprinkle water over the pile regularly so it has the consistency of a damp sponge. Don't add too much water, otherwise the microorganisms in your pile will become waterlogged and drown. If this happens, your pile will begin to rot instead of compost. Monitor the temperature of your pile with a thermometer or reach into the middle of the pile with your hand. It should feel warm.

4



During the growing season, you should provide the pile with oxygen by turning it once a week with a garden fork. The best time to turn the compost is when the centre of the pile feels warm. When the compost no longer gives off heat and becomes dry, brown and crumbly, it's fully cooked and ready to feed the garden. Add about 4-6 inches of compost to your flower beds and into your pots at the beginning of each planting season.