


How to make compost

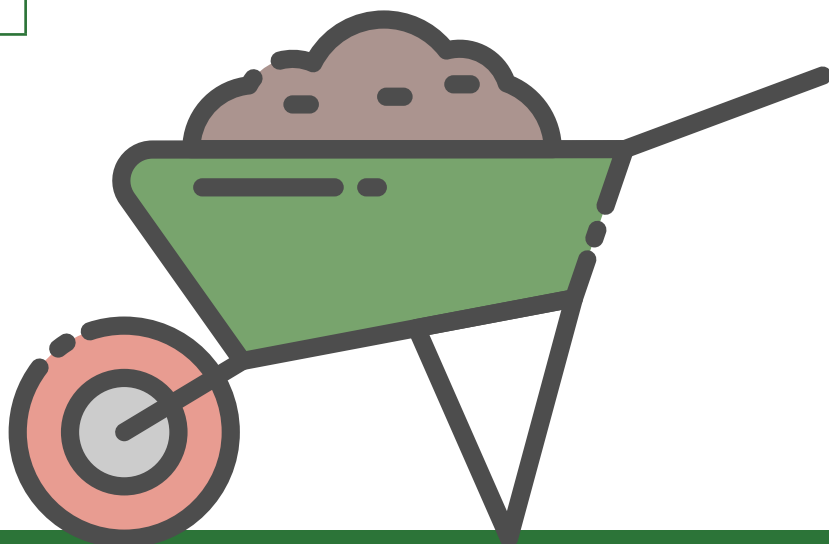
Where's the best place for my compost bin?

- Sunny spot or part-shade
- On bare soil or grass
- Well-drained spot to prevent waterlogging

What should we put in our compost bin?

Yes please 	
Brown materials (carbon)	Green materials (nitrogen)
Cardboard (shredded)	Raw fruit and vegetables peelings
Paper	Tea bags (ideally only tea leaves)
Straw and hay	Coffee grounds
Twigs and hedge clippings (chopped/shredded)	Grass cuttings
Natural fibres e.g. wool and cotton	Plants/annual weeds
Wood ash	Animal poo from herbivores e.g. rabbits, horses, cows and chickens
Fallen leaves	Old cut flowers
Fallen leaves	Crushed egg shells

No thanks 
Cooked food
Meat, fish, dairy, bones, oil
Rice and pasta
Non biodegradable materials i.e. plastics (recycle instead)
Dog or cat waste
Glossy magazines (recycle instead)
Coal ash
Nappies



Keeping your compost healthy

- Aim for a mix of 'browns' and 'greens', about 50/50 works best.
- Let it breathe. Scrunch up cardboard to create small air pockets, and if you are feeling strong use a fork to turn your mix. This helps aerate and mix all of the materials together, speeding up your composting!
- Get the right mix of materials. The key to composting is getting a good balance of 'browns' and 'greens' in your mix. Too wet or smelly? Add some 'browns'. Too dry? Add more 'greens' to increase the moisture in your mix.

Unwanted guests?

To avoid unwanted small animals like rats making your new compost bin their home only put the right things in your bin and place it away from any bird feeders and chicken coops. Remember, meat, dairy and cooked food should never be added.

How long will it take?

This depends. If you've been able to 'turn' your mix and give it lots of attention your compost will be ready sooner. But in general you can expect it to take about a year to turn into dark brown, earthy smelling growing medium.

It's ready, now what?

Your compost might be crumbly, lumpy, sticky or still have pieces of twig and egg shell in it, but that's fine! If you're using it in pots to plant seeds you'll need to sieve it first with something called a riddle. If you're using it to fill up raised beds or just improve planted borders its good to go as it is.

Remember to ensure your class washes their hands thoroughly after handling compost or undertaking gardening activities. Any cuts or open sores should be covered with waterproof plasters. Gloves are not essential if proper handwashing is undertaken. However, you may wish to provide gloves for certain activities and for those with skin allergies such as eczema.

