

Trouble Shooting:

Symptom	Diagnosis	Treatment
Compost has a bad odour	Not enough air or too wet	Stir your pile and add in some extra BROWN material.
Compost pile will not heat up	Too wet or not enough material	If the weather is rainy cover your pile and add more materials.
Compost pile is attracting pests	Improper food trimmings added or food not covered	Line your bin with a fine mesh wiring to deter rodents. To avoid flies, make sure fresh food scraps are buried into the pile.
Process is too slow	Materials are too big or not enough microorganisms	Cut waste materials into small pieces. Mix in a small amount of topsoil with the materials to introduce more microorganisms.
Compost pile is damp but will not heat up	Not enough nitrogen	Add GREEN materials to your pile.

DID YOU KNOW?

If your compost pile has enough water and oxygen, a good balance of material and enough volume, temperatures can reach above 55°C. Heat is the result of the microorganisms decomposing the organic material.

When to Expect Results?

Compost piles can take a couple months or up to a year to decompose. It depends on the material used and the effort involved. Compost will be ready to use when it is dark in colour and has an “earthy” smell.

Visit Regina.ca/waste for more information and to view other composting options that fit your lifestyle.



Your Guide to BACKYARD COMPOSTING

Reduce your household waste and make great soil for your lawn or garden.

City of Regina



What is Composting?

Composting is a natural process that breaks down kitchen, lawn and garden waste into an earthy, soil-like material called, compost.

Why Compost?

1. Provides a free, nutrient-rich soil conditioner for plants, gardens and lawns.
2. It helps to retain soil moisture and nutrients.
3. Means less waste going to the landfill which reduces the methane gas emissions.
4. Reduces the need for expensive chemical fertilizers.
5. It's easy and inexpensive!

DID YOU KNOW?

By composting household materials you can cut the waste you send to the landfill by almost a half.



TIP: Save a few bags of fall leaves to use in your compost bin in the spring when dry materials are hard to find.



Getting Started - 8 Easy Steps:

1 GET YOURSELF A COMPOST BIN: A compost bin should allow easy access to the pile inside and have spaces or holes for airflow.

TIP: A good size for a bin is approximately 1m³ so that the compost pile can generate heat.

2 CHOOSE A BIN LOCATION: Your compost bin should be located in an easily accessible spot in your yard with good drainage and lots of sunlight.

3 START YOUR COMPOST PILE: Start with a 5-10 cm layer of twigs and or other coarse materials at the bottom of your composter. This will promote airflow.

4 LAYER YOUR MATERIALS: A good rule of thumb is to have roughly equal parts of **BROWN** and **GREEN** materials.

TIP: After the first **BROWN** layer add a thin (approximately 2 cm) layer of your own garden soil to introduce microorganisms to the pile.

5 MIX COMPOST PILE: Every week or so, stir your compost pile. This adds oxygen to your pile which is a necessary component for organic materials to decompose quickly without odour.

6 ADD A DASH OF WATER: The microorganisms in your pile need moisture to move around. Keep your compost as moist as a well squeezed sponge.

7 HARVEST YOUR COMPOST: After 4-6 months your compost will be ready to use. The finished compost will be at the bottom of your pile and an easy way to get to it is to tip your bin over or access through a bottom door.

8 USE YOUR COMPOST: Compost can be added directly to the garden, flower beds and potted plants and worked into the soil.

TIP: Water your plants with compost tea! Put your finished compost in an old stocking and put in a bucket of water or your watering can. This method is an easy way to add nutrients to house or potted plants.

What to Compost:

DID YOU KNOW?

You can continue to compost in the winter. In the fall, leave room in your bin to add materials so that in the winter you can simply add materials as they are generated. When spring arrives, the materials will thaw and begin to decompose.

BROWNS

Dry leaves
Evergreen needles
Dried brown grass clippings
Bark chips
Straw
Paper (shred or tear)
Sawdust

(dry carbon-rich material)

GREENS

Flowers
Green leaves
Fresh grass clippings
Spoiled food
Vegetable/ fruit peels & scraps
Coffee grounds (including filter)
Tea bags
Egg shells (crushed)
Cooked pasta and rice
Breads

(moist nitrogen-rich material)

AVOID

Dairy products
Fatty/oily foods
Weeds with mature seeds
Meat, bones and fish scraps
Pet waste
Walnut shells
Charcoal or coal ashes
Plants or grass treated with chemicals