

# GUIDE TO BACKYARD COMPOSTING



## WHY COMPOST?

When you compost, you can reduce what you are sending to the landfill by about 50 percent! It's nature's way of recycling!

## HOW TO COMPOST

1

### DECIDE ON A LOCATION THAT HAS:

- Easy access for your convenience.
- Bare soil for microorganisms to enter the compost from beneath.
- Flat ground for good drainage.

2

### ORGANIZE INDOORS:

- Collect food scraps in the kitchen in a container with a tight lid to keep fruit flies away/minimize odor — or store in your fridge/freezer.
- Chop up larger items like watermelon and pumpkins.

3

### ADD YOUR INGREDIENTS:

- Empty your kitchen container into your compost bin as needed.
- Stir in your new material to the top layer.
- Cover your food scraps with a three-inch layer of leaves or other brown materials.

4

### HARVEST:

- Wait six to twelve months and let nature do its work, or aerate with a shovel and add water as needed to speed up the process. It's ready when the compost is dark brown and earth-like!

## THE FOUR SEASONS OF COMPOSTING

### SPRING:

Stir your bin and add some dirt to kickstart it.



### SUMMER:

Stir your bin. If the material looks dry, add some water to moisten it.



### FALL:

Stir your bin.



### WINTER:

Decomposition slows down; let your bin fill up.



# COMPOST

INCLUDE THE FOOD, PLANTS AND PAPER TOO!



Your bin will work best if it's fed a varied diet of nitrogen-rich greens and carbon-rich browns.

## GREENS

Nitrogen-Rich



Grass clippings and garden trimmings  
*(no weeds with seeds)*



Fruit and vegetable scraps  
*(no stickers)*



Egg shells  
*(crushed)*



Tea leaves and bags  
*(no staples or plastic)*



Coffee grounds and filters

## BROWNS

Carbon-Rich



Fall leaves, straw and hay



Untreated wood chips and shavings



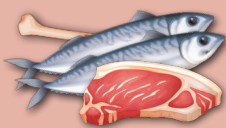
Shredded cardboard  
*(no wax coating/tape/glue)*



Shredded newspaper and brown bags  
*(no glossy bags)*

NO PRODUCE BAGS, STICKERS, TWIST TIES, STAPLES, OR RUBBER BANDS.

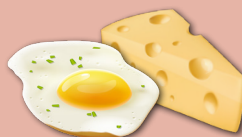
## KEEP THESE OUT!



Meat, fish, and bones\*



Cooked food, fats, oils, and grease\*



Eggs and dairy products\*



Produce stickers



Compostable food service ware and compostable bags\*



Glossy paper



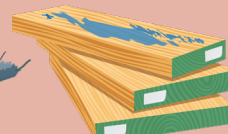
Diseased and pest-infested plants



Herbicide-treated plants and grass



Dryer lint



Chemically-treated and painted wood



Pet waste and cat litter

\* These items are compostable ONLY in commercial compost piles, not at home.