

# 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 even easier than 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 once a week.
- Stir in your new material to the top layer.
- Cover your food scraps with a three-inch layer of leaves, etc.

# 4

### HARVEST:

- Wait six to twelve months and let nature do its work. 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.

### FRESH GREENS

Nitrogen-Rich



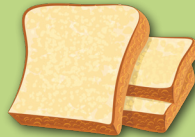
Grass and plant trimmings



Fruits and vegetables



Egg shells



Bread



Rice and legumes



Tea leaves and coffee grounds

Leave produce bags/stickers OUT of your compost!

### DRY BROWNS

Carbon-Rich



Dead leaves, straw and hay



Broken up sticks and wood chips



Coffee filters



Shredded paper



Compostable paper products

(No plastic-lining; tear up)

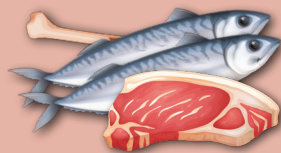


Paper towels and napkins

### KEEP THESE OUT!



Plastic-coated (shiny) paper plates



Meat, fish and bones\*



Food cooked with grease



Dairy products



Certified compostable products\*



Plastic-coated (shiny) to-go containers



To-go hot and cold drink cups



Snack wrappers

\* Meat, fish, bones, and compostable products like hot and cold cups, cutlery and to-go containers are compostable ONLY in commercial compost piles, not in your back yard.



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