

Home Composting

A useful guide



لا تقرأ اللغة الإنجليزية؟ إنتقل إلى صفحة 8

ইংরেজী পড়তে পারেন না? 8 নম্বর পৃষ্ঠা দেখুন

看不懂英文? 請翻至第 8 頁。

영어로 읽으실 수 없나요? 8 페이지

Não sabe ler inglês? Siga para a página 8

 **recycle** for Bournemouth

 **Bournemouth**
Borough Council

What is home composting?

Composting is the use of organic matter such as garden waste or uncooked kitchen vegetable scraps which decompose to form a dark brown soil-like material rich in plant nutrients.

Composting is Nature's way of recycling and it's important because it's one of the few ways in which organic waste can be reused instead of being thrown away and ending up in landfill sites.

Approximately one third of household waste could be suitable for composting at home and composting is one of the most effective actions you can take at home to reduce the amount of waste in your refuse bin.



How do I get started?

- Decide whether you want a compost heap or a compost bin.
- Don't forget to check with Bournemouth Borough Council's Recycling Department to see whether there are any subsidised compost bins on offer.
- Choose a spot for your bin with easy access from your kitchen.
- Choose a sunny spot, with good drainage and away from any fences.
- Keep a caddy in your kitchen so you don't have to go out to the compost bin every day.
- If you have a heap rather than a bin place a piece of carpet on top to retain heat and prevent excess moisture.

What can I compost?

Yes 	Yes - with care 	No - avoid these 
Lawn mowings Hedge clippings Young weeds Cut flowers Finished flowers Vegetable and salad scraps Fruit scraps Tea leaves/bags Coffee grounds Egg shells Spices/herbs Egg boxes Cardboard Bark Rabbit manure Chicken manure	Potato/tomato remains Sawdust Woodchips Newspaper (shredded) Straw Wood ash Perennial weeds Leaves Weeds in seed Bracken Nettles <i>These materials may take longer to decompose so add in small quantities only.</i>	Cooked food Dairy products Diseased plants Persistent weeds Soot Coal ash Dog and cat faeces Cat litter Used nappies Medical materials Plastics Artificial fabrics Glossy paper Wood Lawn mowings sprayed with weed killer

Getting the mix right

Items which you can compost fall into two types, Green 'wet' materials and Brown 'dry' materials. Green materials are things like lawn mowings, vegetable peelings, tea leaves and Brown materials are items such as cardboard, egg boxes and bark.

When filling your compost bin the waste should be added in layers, starting with a brown dry layer followed with a green wet layer, followed by a brown dry layer and so on.

You need to add equal amounts of both green wet materials and brown dry materials to make good compost.

Keep the contents of the compost bin aerated by giving it a turn every once in a while. In 6-12 months you'll have rich dark brown compost. To speed up the composting process chop up the material as you add it to the bin.

So I've made my compost, now how do I use it?

Your compost will be well received by your plants. Compost is nutrient rich, will improve soil structure, manage moisture levels, stabilise pH levels, provide key nutrients and suppress plant diseases.

- Make sure your compost is ready to use, it should be dark brown in colour, with a spongy texture and an earthy smell.
- Don't worry if it doesn't look like the stuff you buy, it may contain twigs and bits of eggshell.
- Help new plants bloom by digging a 4 inch layer into your soil before planting.
- If flowers have already been planted spread a thin layer around the base of your plants to prevent soil erosion.
- Spread a 2-4 inch layer around the roots of trees to help prevent drought, provide nutrients and prevent weeds.
- Mix regular soil with finished compost to make your own potting mix for house plants or to start new plants from seed.

What about Wormeries and food digesters?

- **Wormeries** use a special type of worm to break down kitchen waste and turn it into compost and a concentrated liquid feed.
- Worms have evolved into efficient natural composters, they eat and digest between half and all of their body weight in a day and quickly reduce the bulk of organic waste by up to 80%.
- Wormeries can be expensive so check with the Recycling Department at Bournemouth Borough Council to see if there are any offers in your area.
- **Food digesters** minimise waste at source by taking all food matter, including meat, bones and dairy products.
- Food digesters don't normally take garden waste so be careful when choosing your food digester.
- For more information on Wormeries and Food Digesters contact the Recycling Department on **01202 451199** or **e-mail recycle@bournemouth.gov.uk**

Useful contacts:

Bournemouth Borough Council
Recycling Department:
01202 451199

Bournemouth Borough
Council E-mail:
recycle@bournemouth.gov.uk

Bournemouth Borough
Council website:
www.bournemouth.gov.uk

Recycle Now:
www.recyclenow.com



Troubleshooting

Problem	Cause	Solution
Damp and warm only in the very middle of the pile.	Pile could be too small, or cold weather might have slowed composting.	If you are composting in heaps, keep building your pile to reach at least 3 feet high and 3 feet square. With a bin, the pile doesn't need to be so large. Be patient over the winter months.
Matted leaves or grass clippings aren't decomposing.	Poor aeration or moisture imbalance. Too much of one type of material.	Break up the layers and agitate the pile so that there is a better mix of materials. Shred any larger material that isn't breaking down well. Try making leaf mould by composting large quantities of leaves separately.
Nothing is happening. The compost doesn't seem to be heating up at all.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Not enough nitrogen.2. Not enough oxygen.3. Not enough moisture.4. Cold weather.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Add nitrogen rich sources like manure, grass clippings or raw vegetable & fruit scraps.2. Mix up the pile & introduce more scrunched paper or cardboard, so it can breathe.3. Mix up the pile & add moisture rich ingredients or even liquids, such as the emptyings from your tea or coffee pot. A completely dry pile doesn't compost.4. Cover the pile for insulation or use a bin.



Problem	Cause	Solution
Attracts millipedes, slugs, ants and the like.	All these insects & minibeasts create important food chains & perform useful functions, as part of the natural composting process.	They only pose a problem if the contents become imbalanced and consequently, one predominates. Simply mix up the contents to redress the balance of moisture throughout the pile.
What about fruit flies?	Contents too wet, or kitchen scraps too close to the surface.	Make sure your pile has a good mix of materials. Cover fresh food material at the surface with a layer of wood ash, sawdust, Hoover dust or newspaper.
Attracts other animals.	Inappropriate materials (like meat, oil, bones), or the food-like material is too close to the surface of the pile.	Bury any strong smelling kitchen scraps near the centre of the pile. Don't add inappropriate materials to compost. (See 'What can I compost' table on page 3).
Unpleasant odours.	Not enough carbon or oxygen. Pile is too wet or compacted.	Aerate the pile by mixing it up. Add dry 'brown' materials like crumpled paper, egg boxes, wood ash, Hoover dust, straw or hay. This will absorb excess moisture whilst also introducing more air.
Bin is full.	Bin may be too small for household.	Try using either two bins in rotation or move to a larger bin. Some compost may be ready to be removed & used. Harvest anything worth using to create more space in existing bin.

(Source: www.recyclenow.com)

■ Arabic

تتناول هذه النشرة التسميد المنزلي. إن كنت ترغب بالحصول على نسخة بلغتك الرجاء وضع علامة في المربع وملء إسمك وعنوانك أدناه.

■ Bengali

এই প্রকাশনাটি বাড়িতে কম্পোস্ট তৈরির সম্পর্কিত। যদি আপনার ভাষায় এর একটি কপি পেতে চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে ঘরটিতে টিকচিহ্ন দিন এবং নিচে আপনার নাম ও ঠিকানা লিখুন।

■ Cantonese

本刊主要介紹家居堆肥。如需以您的母語書寫的版本，請勾選相應的選框，並在下面填寫您的姓名和住址。

■ Korean

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■ Portuguese

Esta publicação é sobre compostagem doméstica. Se desejar receber uma cópia no seu idioma, por favor assinale a caixa e preencha abaixo o seu nome e endereço.

Name:

Address

Postcode:

Reply address:

Recycling Department, Bournemouth Borough Council,
103 Southcote Road, Bournemouth, BH1 3SW.

**For an audio or large print copy in English
please call 01202 451199.**

All information correct at the time of printing.



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