

Composting

Composting is an easy way to cut down on the solid waste that you produce. The average US household produces 4.5 lbs of solid waste a day. Each pound of solid waste in a landfill produces 2lbs of greenhouse gases. A compost pile is used to turn your raw food scraps into nutrient rich soil that can be used as fertilizer in a garden.

Follow these easy steps to start a compost pile. The effort required ranges from minimal to somewhat involved, depending on how quickly and of what quality you want your compost.

- Choose an area of your yard that is approximately 3x5', and out of direct sunlight. Clear the area of sod and grass.
- There are a variety of commercially available compost bins, or you can create your own with scrap wood, or chicken wire, but make sure to leave space for air to reach pile.
- Start with a 4-inch layer of leaves or yard trimmings, and then continue to layer food scraps with yard trimmings to increase the efficiency of your compost pile.
- Turn the pile every few weeks to circulate air and distribute moisture.
- In dry weather, you can add a small amount of water the pile, but do not allow it get soggy.
- Depending on how you maintain your compost pile, it will produce a dark crumbly material in anywhere from 3-12 months. At this stage it can be spread on your garden, under shrubs, or used as potting soil.

- What can be composted?
 - o Vegetables & fruits
 - o Egg shells
 - o Coffee grounds & filters
 - o Tea bags
 - o Leaves, grass & yard trimmings
 - o Wool and cotton rags
 - o Sawdust
 - o Fireplace ashes

- What cannot be composted?
 - o Meat & fish
 - o Dairy
 - o Fats, oils, grease
 - o Processed foods

For more information, check out

www.healthgoods.com/Education/Environment_Information/environment_information.htm#Composting

or

www.gardeners.com/Composting%20Made%20Easy/5061,default,pg.html