

Understanding And Practicing Composting



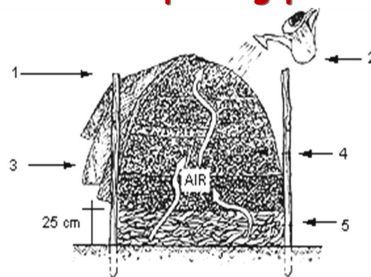
What is composting?

Composting is a natural biological process, which converts organic material into a humus-like product. During the Composting Process various microorganisms including bacteria and fungi, break down organic material into simpler substances.

Composting is an aerobic process meaning that to do their work the microorganisms require oxygen.

What is needed

1. Green and brown material
2. Water: Kept moist but not wet
3. Shade: Protection from rain and sun
4. Finely cut material, loosely packed
- First layer: very coarse material
5. Air: should always be present within the composting pile.



Selecting a compost site

Shade: not too much sun prevent the pile from drying up too quickly.

Good location: close and convenient to your raw materials.

Enough space: where you can manage & turn your compost with ease.

Water: close enough for watering

Good drainage: too much water just like not enough will be a problem to your compost pile.

In a secured area: away from rodents, fowls and pets these can disturb the composting process.

How Does Compost Happen?

<u>Nitrogen 'Greens'</u>	<u>Carbon 'Browns'</u>
Vegetable scraps	Dry leaves
Fruit peelings	Saw dust
Grass clippings	'course not too fine'
Farm manure	
Garden weeds	Straw dry grass
Gloricida	Wood ash 'none treated wood'
Lukennia	Paper
Green leaves	Dry branches
Vines	'chipped'

What does the pile need?



A sample trial guide to home and community composting
 Researched and compiled for
 DSWMC by Camille LeBlanc, Min. Agri.
 Community & Home Gardening Guide CHGG Copyright©2010-2011
 Contact: 767 225 3708
 E-mail: hasheem27@hotmail.com

FEEDING THE COMPOST PILE.

Balancing the pile. 'Browns & Greens'

Maintaining the right mix of brown 'carbon organic material' green 'nitrogen organic material' will speed the time it takes to complete the compost process

Browns :

Decay very slowly
keep the pile aerated
tie up nitrogen in soil
not full composted

Greens :

Decay rapidly
supply nitrogen to pile.
Poor aeration may have odors
composted alone

Materials To Avoid

Putting In A Compost Pile

Animal products, human & pet waste
Processed or cooked food products
materials containing chemical residues
Fatty/oily/greasy food

MAINTAINANCE OF YOUR COMPOST

- 1) Use a stick to check temperature.
- 2) If too hot or smelly turn pile
- 3) Turn the pile every 14 days
- 4) Check moisture levels every seven days



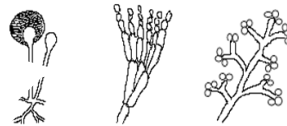
Macroorganisms

Organisms are involved in physically transforming organic material into compost.

They are active during the later stages of composting digging, chewing, sucking, digesting and mixing compostable materials.

In addition to mixing materials they break it into smaller pieces and transform it into more digestible forms for microorganisms.

Their excrement is also digested by bacteria, causing more nutrients to be released.



Microorganisms break down organic matter and produce carbon dioxide water, heat, and humus,
Humus:-the organic product

HARVESTING COMPOST

Harvest compost for use 3 to 4 months after start date.

After harvest let heal for about 7 to 14 days before using in vegetables.

First sift to strain out all unfinished compost materials.

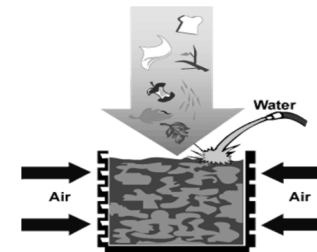
Mix with soil before use for sowing or transplanting.

For potting plants place in potting bags.

Before planting always add a little moisture to the composted soil ~ release of nutrients.



Ideas for using composts



sample home compost

Compost picture showing Air & water circulation and addition of materials
THE THREE MAIN INGREDIENTS IN A COMPOST.