


## Compost recipe



I live in the compost. Feed me lots of different foods, keep me moist and turn me regularly.

### What can I compost? ✓

Making compost is like making a cake. You need to measure the different ingredients to get the right mixture. Remember that ingredients break down faster when they are chopped into smaller pieces.

#### INGREDIENTS:

##### 1/2 Brown stuff (Carbon-rich)

newspaper and cardboard

egg cartons and pizza boxes

dry garden waste (straw, twigs, dead leaves)

##### 1/4 Green stuff (Nitrogen rich)

green wet garden waste (fresh leaves, grass clippings, weeds)

manure

human and animal hair

##### 1/4 Food scraps

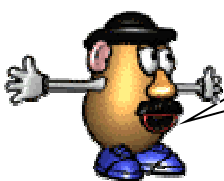
fruit and veggie scraps

bread, crackers, biscuits

meat, fish and dairy products

tea bags and coffee grounds

egg shells



Turn compost regularly to make sure air and all the ingredients are spread evenly in the pile.

### What not to put in the compost X

- metal, glass, plastic (including glad wrap and foil)
- diseased plants
- noxious weeds (runner weeds such as couch grass and weeds with bulbs such as oxalis)

In big compost systems, it is possible to include diseased plants and noxious weeds because temperatures get up to 60-70°C which is hot enough to kill most pathogens and weed seeds. These temperatures are difficult to reach in smaller (ie less than 1m<sup>2</sup>) composting systems. It is therefore advisable to put disease plants and noxious weeds into the rubbish. This ensures that they won't spread into your garden.

### How long does it take to make compost?

It can take anything from 1 to 12 months until all the organic stuff is broken down into finished compost. The time taken depends on many things, including how much waste is collected and the conditions inside the bin. Following the advice on this card should help speed up the process and help you remedy the compost when things go wrong.

### How do I know when the compost is ready?

The finished compost is brown-black in colour, smells earthy and is moist and crumbly. It may have larger pieces of garden waste or avocado pips that can be sifted out with a sieve you can buy from the hardware shop or a plastic bread crate is also effective. Compost can be placed around the base of the plants in the garden bed, in plant pots or it can be sprinkled on top of the garden beds in between crop rotations.

### Compost remedies

**Smelly compost** The compost may be too wet or may have too much green stuff.

**Remedy:** Add more brown stuff into the compost and mix it in with the garden fork.

**Too many ants** The compost is too dry.

**Remedy:** Add some water and add some green stuff to the mix.


**No worms** Few worms indicate that there aren't enough worms in the compost to begin with or that the environment isn't right.

**Remedy:** make sure the ingredients of the mix are balanced and that the moisture content is not too wet or too dry. Add more worms.

**Rats, mice and flies** These critters are part of the food chain and will naturally be attracted to your compost bin. You may not be able to stop them from visiting your compost, but there are several things you can do to prevent them.

**Remedy:** Seal the bottom of the bin with fine chicken wire. Cover the top with a lid made from material that lets air in and keeps pests out. Hessian, mesh or shade cloth are some examples.

If you have too much food, add more brown stuff and mix well. Adding some fresh manure will kick-start the composting process. Follow the ratios listed in the compost recipe and food in the bin will break down quickly, leaving pests with nothing to eat!



This is magical! All your food scraps have become compost for the garden!