

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DOES COMPOSTING SMELL?

No, a properly balanced compost pile should not smell. Adding “browns” and mixing your pile solves most odor issues.

HOW LONG BEFORE I CAN HARVEST COMPOST?

Look for a dark brown, crumbly material at the bottom of your pile in six to 12 months.

HOW MOIST SHOULD MY PILE BE?

Keep contents moist, like a damp sponge, but not soggy.

HOW DO I KEEP CRITTERS OUT OF MY PILE?

Leave meat, dairy, oil and fat out of your pile and cover the top with a layer of “browns.”

HOW CAN I GET RID OF FRUIT FLIES IN MY HOUSE?

Empty kitchen container at first sight of fruit flies.

HOW CAN I SPEED UP THE PROCESS?

Chop large materials into smaller pieces, mix pile once a week by moving material from outside to the center and toss in a handful of soil to introduce more microorganisms.

WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN A GOOD COMPOST BIN?

A locking lid, round shape for easy compost removal, side ventilation and a harvest door at the base.

WHY, HOW AND WHAT TO COMPOST*

* A mixture of decomposed organic matter, from food waste to grass clippings



WHY COMPOST?

Composting enriches your soil, saves money on fertilizer and keeps waste out of our landfill

≈ **34%**
of the average
trash can

is food and yard waste
that can be composted

The average household
composter diverts

650 LBS of organic
waste

from the South Wake
Landfill each year!



Environmental
Services

WAKEGOV.COM/COMPOST

Visit our website to learn more about
composting at home

HOW TO COMPOST

1

Pick a spot

- ✓ Convenient location with easy access
- ✓ Near a garden hose for watering
- ✓ Place on flat, bare ground for good drainage
- ✓ A shaded area helps prevent drying out

2

Collect in the kitchen

- ✓ Keep fruit flies away by using a container with a tight lid
- ✓ Chop up larger items, such as watermelon rinds and pumpkins

3

Add ingredients

- ✓ Empty your kitchen container once a week
- ✓ Mix in new material
- ✓ Cover food scraps with a layer of leaves or carbon-rich “browns”

4

Harvest!

- ✓ Give nature 6 to 12 months to do its work
- ✓ Harvest when compost is dark brown and crumbly

THE FOUR SEASONS OF COMPOSTING



Spring

Mix and add soil to kickstart your pile



Summer

Mix, mix, mix!
Add water when drier than a wrung-out sponge



Fall

Keep mixing and adding material!



Winter

Let your pile fill up.
Decomposition slows when it's cold

WHAT TO COMPOST



Dry browns

Carbon-rich

- ✓ Dead leaves
- ✓ Twigs
- ✓ Straw & hay
- ✓ Sawdust, bark & wood chips
- ✓ Paper towels & napkins
- ✓ Pizza boxes
- ✓ Coffee filters
- ✓ Paper egg cartons
- ✓ Newspapers & paper bags

For best results, feed your pile a diverse diet of carbon-rich “browns” and nitrogen-rich “greens” in a ratio of 2:1



Fresh greens

Nitrogen-rich

- ✓ Fruit & vegetable scraps
- ✓ Coffee grounds & tea leaves
- ✓ Dead flowers & blossoms
- ✓ Yard trimmings
- ✓ Grass clippings
- ✓ Rabbit, chicken & hamster droppings
- ✓ Houseplant prunings
- ✓ Rinsed, crushed eggshells
- ✓ Freezer-burned fruits & vegetables



Leave out

- ✗ Meat, fish & dairy products
- ✗ Cat & dog waste
- ✗ Weeds gone to seed
- ✗ Greasy food
- ✗ Plants treated with chemical pesticides
- ✗ Diseased plants