

Woodlands Nurseries

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MAKING COMPOST

When Begin in spring to have compost by autumn.
Compost can be made all year round

What you need a compost bin with a lid
old plant waste
kitchen waste
soil
used animal or pet bedding

About this project

Installing a compost bin into your garden will encourage your children to recycle and introduce them to the natural cycle of growth and decay. Making compost will clarify the link between plant growth and healthy soil. Composting is a great way to reduce and recycle kitchen and garden waste. It transforms discarded peels and unwanted prunings into valuable garden products.

What to do

1. Place a compost bin in a suitable location in your garden, ensuring that it is placed on earth and not concrete. You may need to assist your children in doing this.
2. Fill the bin with:
 - Fruit and vegetable peelings and leaves
 - Egg shells
 - tea leaves/ tea bags and coffee grounds
 - fallen leaves
 - grass clippings
 - soft prunings
 - weeds (use only young weeds; those with seed, or about to set seed, are better disposed of in the garbage bin)
 - cow and horse manures
 - ash (from open fireplaces)
 - vacuum cleaner contents (synthetic carpet will not break down)
3. It is important that the heap is not treated simply as a dump. So don't put:
 - Meat, fish, chicken, dairy products & cooking oils - these may attract vermin such as mice and other pests.
 - Non-living things such as plastics, bottle tops, food wrappers, metals etc
 - Diseased plants
 - Fruit fly infested fruit
 - Pet droppings: these may contain diseases that can affect humans and other pets.

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4. Cover the bin with its lid to keep the heat in and leave it until you have some more waste to put inside.
5. After three or four months remove the cover and help your child to dig the compost over. Leave it to rot down further.
6. When the bottom of the compost is brown and crumbly, it is ready. The compost can be dug into the garden - your plants will be really pleased!

Tips

- A good mixture of the items mentioned is the key to creating good compost. It is best not to add too much of one thing - balance is the key.
- The smaller the pieces, the faster they break down. Chop up larger and tougher items before they go in the bin.
- Occasionally add a thin (3-5cm) layer of soil to help things move along. The addition of manure will also help the compost break down more quickly.
- The compost should be regularly turned over to help it to break down faster.
- Wear gardening gloves when handling compost and wash your hands afterwards.