

INGREDIENTS LIST

Greens	Browns	Activators
- Grass clippings - Green leaves/weeds - Flowers and plants - Food scraps - Fruit and veggies - Coffee grounds - Tea leaves - Crushed eggshells - Hair - Vegetable oil	- Dry leaves - Shredded newspaper - Small twigs - Paper products - Wood chips/ash - Nutshells - Sawdust - Straw - Vacuum-cleaner dust - Dry leaves	- Soil - Comfrey - Yarrow - Animal manure - Blood and bone - Old compost

THINGS TO AVOID

- Meat/fish/bones
- Fat
- Animal droppings
- Glossy paper
- Dairy products
- Stones
- Metal plastic
- Large branches/woodchips
- Diseased plants/weeds

USING YOUR COMPOST

Once your compost bin is full, it is estimated to take around 12 weeks to mature, depending on how often it is aerated, then it's ready to use! Don't worry if there are some differently sized chunks in your compost – you can either leave the larger chunks in your compost or sift them out and return them to your compost bin.

Ways to use compost:

- Sift and use as potting mix/seed-raising mix or as a top dressing for lawns.
- Use it as a mulch around trees to encourage healthy plant growth.
- Apply it to natives twice a year to encourage growth.
- Bury the compost into the soil for maximum benefits.

COMPOSTING AT THE CITY OF MELVILLE

About half of what we throw away is food and garden waste. You can reduce the amount of waste you put into your green-topped bin, as well as the amount of garden fertiliser you need to buy, through home composting!

Composting is a simple, natural process that breaks down organic waste into a crumbly, dark brown material that you can use on your garden.

Why compost at home?

Reduce your household waste

The organic waste that you produce can be used to make compost. This includes food scraps, lawn clippings, weeds, leaves, branches, straw, paper, hair etc.

Recycle valuable nutrients trapped in your waste

Use the compost to improve your soil and give your garden a boost! The rich nutrients within your organic waste will be released into the soil where they:

- Assist plant growth and disease resistance.
- Reduce unwanted insects and decrease pesticide use.
- Help your sandy soil retain water and reduce runoff to waterways.

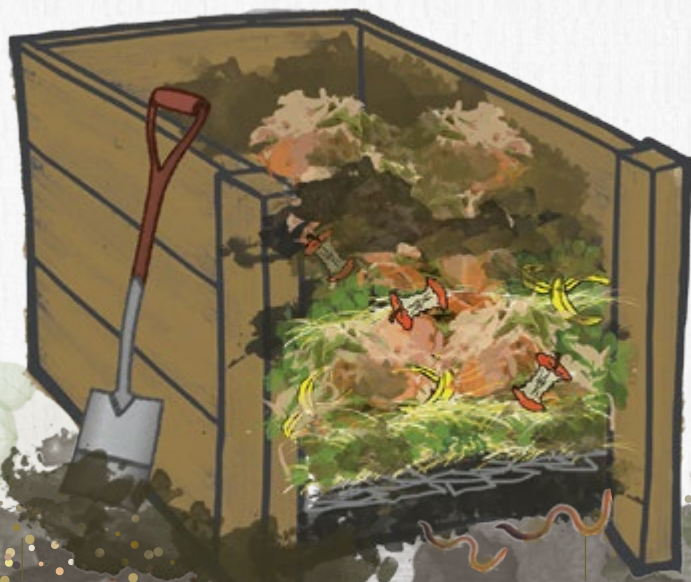
Composting is easy, clean and a great way to help the environment!





SETTING UP AND MAINTAINING YOUR COMPOST BIN

1. Choose a location with good drainage and lots of shade in summer.
2. Bury the bottom 10cm of the bin in the soil. You can cover the base with a layer of chicken wire to stop pests getting in.
3. Add a 15cm layer of **brown** waste (*see ingredients list*) to aerate the compost and provide drainage.
4. Add a layer of **activators** to introduce beneficial micro-organisms into the compost.
5. Add water.
6. Then add thin layers of nitrogen-based **green** waste and carbon-based **brown** waste, adding **activators** occasionally. The compost should be moist so add water as necessary.
7. Turn your compost with a pitch fork every few weeks to add air to the compost, compost bin should have roughly 1/3 Green and 2/3 Brown matter.



COMMON PROBLEMS

Sometimes you may encounter problems with your compost – don't worry, they're easy to fix!

Smelly compost can be caused by too much water or green waste. To absorb the moisture, add more brown waste. Improve the drainage by putting some planks under the base of the bin.

Anaerobic organisms thrive in compost that is not turned regularly and produce acid which can also make compost smelly and attract cockroaches. Add garden lime, dolomite or woodfire ash to neutralise the acid.

Pests and flies can be attracted when food waste is not covered. This is easy to prevent by always adding a brown layer on top of the green layer, covering the heap with underfelt, hessian or polythene plastic and making sure the lid is secure. Avoid dairy, meat and seafood.

Ants are attracted when the compost is too dry so increase green waste and water.

Rats/mice can be avoided by securing mouse mesh to the base, making sure the lid is secure and avoiding meat/dairy.

If your compost is **slow to mature**, add more green waste and water. Try adding insulating materials such as hessian bag or soil to the top of the pile to get it cooking!

COMPOST BIN REBATE

If you live within the City of Melville, you are eligible for the Compost Bin Rebate. To receive a rebate of up to \$50, purchase a compost bin from a retailer, complete the online Rebate Application form at www.melvillecity.com.au/compost-bin-rebate and return to us with:

- A copy of the compost bin purchase receipt.
- Proof of address within the City of Melville (*e.g. rates notice, driver's licence, utility bill*).

Refunds will be processed by EFT or cheque within 8 weeks.

The compost bin rebate is subject to annual funding availability. If the rebate is no longer available when you apply, you will be contacted upon receipt of your application and added to a waiting list for the next available funding.

For any queries, please contact an Environmental Education Officer on **08 9364 0790**.

