



What Not to Compost - The OUT List

Leave Out/Reason Why

- Black walnut tree leaves or twigs

Releases substances that might be harmful to plants

- Coal or charcoal ash

Might contain substances harmful to plants

- Dairy products (e.g., butter, milk, sour cream, yogurt) and eggs

Create odor problems and attract pests such as rodents and flies

- Diseased or insect-ridden plants

Diseases or insects might survive and be transferred back to other plants

- Fats, grease, lard, or oils

Create odor problems and attract pests such as rodents and flies

- Meat or fish bones and scraps

Create odor problems and attract pests such as rodents and flies

- Pet wastes (e.g., dog or cat feces, soiled cat litter)

Might contain parasites, bacteria, germs, pathogens, and viruses harmful to humans

- Yard trimmings treated with chemical pesticides

Might kill beneficial composting organisms

*Nearly half of Illinois residents have some form of health problem- *allergies, bronchitis, emphysema, other lung problems (like asthma) or heart problems-* that can be worsened by the toxins released from a smoky leaf fire.

*Sudden death can occur for these sensitive populations after breathing leaf smoke.

(Am. Heart Assoc. of IL)

www.DanversCleanAirForAll.yolasite.com

Tips & Warnings

^Healthy compost smells pleasantly earthy - turn it more often and add more dry brown matter if yours smells funky.

^Water your compost pile only during extended dry weather, and then only enough to moisten it, not drench the contents.

^Many excellent compost systems of varying sizes are available at different price levels.

Clean Air Should Be A right For All

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The Hazards of Open Leaf Burning and The Environmentally Friendly Alternative



Because

We

“Cair”

Burning a ton of leaves will produce about

- * 117 pounds of carbon monoxide
- * 41 pounds of particulates

(most of them small enough to be easily absorbed in the deepest parts of the lungs)

- * at least 7 highly carcinogenic (cancer-causing) polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons

It is bad for everyone who breathes it in!

(Am. Heart Assoc. of IL)

Creating Your Own Backyard Compost

6. Add in a shovelful of finished compost or garden soil to help kick start the microbial activity in your pile.

7. Compost also needs the correct amount of moisture to breakdown. Compost with the right moisture level should feel like a damp, wrung-out sponge. Too much moisture can cause temperatures to fall within the pile (and make it smell). Too little moisture slows down the decomposition rate and keeps the pile from heating up. Check your compost pile's moisture level once a week and adjust it if necessary by adding water to increase moisture or more browns to help dry the pile out.

8. Turn the pile once a week to move material from the outside of the pile in. Turning also keeps the pile from compacting, which reduces airflow and slows down decomposition.

9. You should have finished compost in about two months. You'll know your compost is finished when it no longer heats up and you can't identify any of the original materials. The compost should be dark brown, moist and earthy smelling. Dig finished compost into your garden's soil. You can use partially composted material as mulch.

10. You can also build a very basic, passive compost system by simply piling up leaves, grass clippings and other yard waste into a pile in a secluded corner of your yard. The compost will be ready when the original ingredients are unrecognizable, usually in about 6 to 12 months. Compost at the bottom and middle of the pile typically "finishes" first.

What to Compost - The IN List

- Animal manure
- Cardboard rolls
- Clean paper
- Coffee grounds and filters
- Cotton rags
- Dryer and vacuum cleaner lint
- Eggshells
- Fireplace ashes
- Fruits and vegetables
- Grass clippings
- Hair and fur
- Hay and straw
- Houseplants
- Leaves
- Nut shells
- Sawdust
- Shredded newspaper
- Tea bags
- Wood chips
- Wool rags
- Yard trimmings



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NOTE: Finished compost can be applied to lawns and gardens to help condition the soil and replenish nutrients. **Compost, however, should not be used as pottng soil for houseplants because of the presence of weed and grass seeds.**

<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/composting/basic.htm>

1. Choose a site that is handy to your garden and kitchen, yet out of plain sight.

2. You don't need a bin to make compost-a pile of leaves, grass clippings and other yard wastes will do-but a bin keeps the compost contained and looks neater. You can corral compost in a simple wire column made from a 4-foot wide by 8-foot long piece of stiff wire mesh.

3. You can also buy a more permanent bin or build a three-bin compost system made from slatted wood or recycled pallets. Leave the bins open on one side so you can add compost materials and turn the pile easily. Cover the top of the bins with a sheet of plywood if you live in a very rainy climate. A three-bin system allows you to turn the compost from one bin to another and store finished compost until you are ready to use it.

4. The two basic elements that make up compost are green garden debris (grass clippings or old annuals) and brown garden debris (dry leaves). Green ingredients are high in nitrogen and brown materials are high in carbon. Adding too many greens can make the pile smell bad.

5. Compost piles with a balance of one part green to two part brown materials break down fastest. The easiest way to achieve this balance is to add one garden forkful of green material to the pile, top it with two forkfuls of brown material, and mix them together. Continue adding greens and browns until the pile is at least 3 cubic feet (3 ft. x 3 ft. x 3 ft.). Piles of this size heat up quickly and break down faster.

http://www.ehow.com/how_3541_begin-compost-pile.html