

DO I NEED A COMPOST CONTAINER? YES AND NO.

A compost container is useful to keep the materials close together, to keep them from blowing around, and to keep the pile from being an eyesore.

The container should be around 3 feet high, wide and deep. This is the best size to get compost to "cook."

Commercial compost containers are advertised. They can be very handy for keeping the pile out of sight. It is hard to turn the materials in a container.

Homemade containers can be very useful. Wood and wire boxes keep materials together and allow water and light to help the process.

What is "compost"?

Compost is organic material that has broken down. It is created when organisms like bacteria, fungi, insects and worms "eat" the organic materials or each other.

Compost is not fertilizer. It is an amendment that improves the quality of the soil. The addition of compost allows plants to absorb the minerals they need, making them bigger and stronger.

Finished compost is also called "humus."

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The Western Finger Lakes Authority schedules a collection for household hazardous waste and electronics each year.

Residents from Wayne and Yates Counties may bring their hazardous materials, computers, and other electronics to a central drop-off location.

*Please call for more information
1.800.724.3867*

KEEP ORGANICS OUT OF THE TRASH

Organic material, including food waste and yard waste, can make up to 25% of materials going to the landfill.

The nutrients captured in these materials can be returned to useful life after composting.

SOME INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES:

<http://www.wormwoman.com/acatalog/index.html>
information on and products (including worms) for worm composting

Composting with worms can be done all year around inside your home. Worms will convert fruit and vegetable scraps into compost.

<http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/tompkins/compost/>
fact sheets on compost that can be downloaded

<http://www.compostguide.com/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compost>

<http://www.howtocompost.org/>

<http://www.mastercomposter.com/>



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Western Finger Lakes
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COMPOST—
ANOTHER
FORM OF
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—and compost—
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Compost—Another Form of Recycling

The Main Ingredients

Simple ingredients for compost:

- Apple peels and cores
- Banana peels
- Beans—green and yellow
- Cabbage
- Celery
- Coffee grounds & filter papers
- Cucumbers
- Egg shells
- Grapefruit peels
- Grass clippings*
- Leaves
- Lemon peels
- Onion peels
- Orange peels
- Pear cores
- Plants from the garden
- Spoiled vegetables
- Tea bags



Recipe: Cook Until Done

Simple Compost Recipe

Create a base of 3 – 4 inches of woody, brushy material to promote aeration. Do not mix into pile.

Alternate layers of green and brown materials, keeping layers 2 – 4 inches.

- o Green (nitrogen) and wet; grass, food scraps (uncooked fruit and vegetables, coffee grounds with filter papers, tea bags, eggshells, garden trimmings)
- o Brown (carbon) and dry; fall leaves, straw and newspaper strips.
- o Chop larger pieces for quicker decomposition.

When adding a food scrap layer, sprinkle with soil & then cap with layer of brown to prevent smells and flies.

Mix contents often (about every 2 weeks). This introduces air and gets pile to “cook.”

Mix older materials with newer materials for faster decomposition.

Moisture: Materials should be damp like a wrung-out dishrag. Only add water if pile is very dry.

Pile will shrink.

Continue to add material and mix every 2 weeks until the (3-foot-high) bin is full. Allow the pile to work undisturbed for a couple of months.

Compost is “done” when it looks and smells like a damp forest. Compost should look like dark brown moist soil with very few identifiable materials.

Aging the compost allows it to “finish,” so it is not too “hot” to put around tender plants.

Screening the compost takes out the bigger, un-decomposed materials to start the next pile.

Do not put meat or milk products, grease or cooking oil or food with dressing or condiments in the compost.

TIP: Save leaves from the fall in plastic bags to use the next growing season as cover for food waste and even green plants from the garden.

COMPOST is not a fertilizer. It is a soil amendment that makes water, air and nutrients more available to growing plants.

* Grass clippings are best left on the lawn where they can act as mulch and then provide nutrients for the grass as they decompose.

This “recipe” was adjusted from “Hot Compost Recipes from Vancouver’s City Farmer,” *BioCycle*, Feb., 2004, p 6