

## Troubleshooting

Most common problems will be solved by adding brown materials, which will balance moisture, eliminate odour and discourage pests.

Symptom	Diagnosis	Treatment
Smells bad	Not enough oxygen; too wet	Mix and aerate; add browns.
Not composting, pile is wet	Too wet; too many greens; poor drainage	Mix in coarse dry browns; add more woody materials to base layer; re-site bin.
Not composting, pile is dry throughout	Not enough moisture; too many browns	Add more fresh greens; moisten with water; mix contents; cover pile to reduce evaporation.
Attracts pests or wildlife	Food scraps exposed; inappropriate materials added; not enough brown material.	Mix in food scraps with old material and cover with 5-10cm of browns or soil; avoid adding items from "What's Out" list; add equal amounts of greens and browns.
Kitchen scraps container smells	Not emptied or washed frequently enough; accumulation of standing liquid; unsuitable container.	Empty more frequently; wash after emptying; line with newspaper to absorb moisture and odour; use a container with a tight-fitting lid or one purpose-made for kitchen scraps; try a metal, glass, or odour-absorbing container.
Fruit flies in kitchen	Scraps are attracting fruit flies	Seal container with a tight-fitting lid; keep container in fridge or freezer.

### Resources:

[wildsafebc.com/learn/wildsafe-yard](http://wildsafebc.com/learn/wildsafe-yard)  
[www.cityfarmer.eco](http://www.cityfarmer.eco)  
[compost.bc.ca/education/factsheets](http://compost.bc.ca/education/factsheets)

## The Dirt on Composting Myths

<b>Myth:</b>	Composters attract rodents and other animals.
<b>The Dirt:</b>	Animals are not attracted to properly maintained composters.
<b>Solution:</b>	Don't put bones, meat, dairy products, oil or grease in composters.
<b>Myth:</b>	Yard is too small.
<b>The Dirt:</b>	Composting takes up little space.
<b>Solution:</b>	With the variety of options available there are composters smaller than garbage cans and you can even compost indoors with worm composting or bokashi. Compost is useful for even the smallest gardens.
<b>Myth:</b>	Composting smells.
<b>The Dirt:</b>	Composters rarely smell, and it's easy to resolve if they do.
<b>Solution:</b>	Mix in more brown material, or follow the troubleshooting guide.
<b>Myth:</b>	Garburators are a better choice for food waste.
<b>The Dirt:</b>	Disposing of food through garburators can clog pipes and treatment facilities and wastes water and nutrients.
<b>Solution:</b>	Save your pipes; compost kitchen food scraps.
<b>Myth:</b>	Food biodegrades in the landfill anyway.
<b>The Dirt:</b>	In a landfill food decomposes in the absence of oxygen, producing methane, a potent greenhouse gas.
<b>Solution:</b>	Help your garden and the planet: return the nutrients in your food scraps to the soil and use your Green Bin for what you can't compost at home
<b>Myth:</b>	Composting is hard and messy.
<b>The Dirt:</b>	Composting takes just a few minutes each week. It's no messier than putting food scraps in the garbage.
<b>Solution:</b>	Try it and research which option best suits the time and organics you wish to compost.

[www.scrd.ca/composting](http://www.scrd.ca/composting)  
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 604-885-6806



## HOME COMPOSTING



[www.scrd.ca/composting](http://www.scrd.ca/composting)

## Care for your yard and for wildlife

### 1. IDENTIFY AND REMOVE ATTRACTANTS

Keep your yard free of fallen fruit, pet food and store your waste inside. Bears and wildlife are attracted to bird feeders, piles of grass and uncleaned BBQs.

### 2. MAINTAIN YOUR COMPOST BIN

Follow the steps in this guide to keep your compost bin operating efficiently.

### 3. LANDSCAPE TO REMOVE COVER AND FOOD FOR WILDLIFE

Wildlife like places to hide so keeping your trees and shrubs trimmed to prevent ground cover and considering plants that are not a food attractant will help keep unwanted wildlife out.

### 4. BLOCK OFF ACCESS FOR SMALLER ANIMALS THAT LIKE SMALL CAVITIES FOR NESTING

Buried heavy gauge mesh can prevent burrowing animals from digging under your deck or under your composter while still allowing for drainage.

## Get the best out of your compost!

With the right mix of materials, moisture and oxygen, your composter will create a valuable soil amendment without creating odours that can attract wildlife and pests.

### 1. Place your composter

Put your composter in a well-drained, sunny and convenient location, preferably some distance from walls and fences to discourage rodents. Place on freshly turned, exposed soil to make it easier for microorganisms, worms and insects to access.

### 2. Create a base layer

Add about 10 cm of dry leaves, straw, twigs or small branches to the bottom. This allows air to circulate and encourages proper drainage.

### 3. Add food scraps, food soiled paper and yard waste

Add roughly equal amounts of nitrogen-rich green materials and carbon-rich brown materials in alternating layers up to 10 cm thick (see the “What’s In, What’s Out” chart). When adding greens, mix in with older material and cover with a layer of browns or soil 5-10 cm thick to suppress odour.

### 4. Add oxygen and regulate moisture

Mix and loosen up the pile every week or two with a pitchfork, strong stick, old ski pole or compost aeration tool, poking holes all the way down to the bottom. Contents should be moist like a wrung-out sponge; if too dry, add more greens; if too wet, add more browns. After aerating, cover with a layer of browns.

### 5. Harvest and use your compost

It usually takes 3 to 9 months to produce finished compost, which is a dark, moist, crumbly soil-like material with an earthy smell found at the bottom and center.

- **Feed your lawn:** rake a layer of compost on your lawn about 5 mm thick.
- **Use in your garden:** spread around the base of shrubs, trees and perennials.
- **Plant food:** dig into the soil of garden beds before planting.
- **Dish the dirt:** share with your neighbours!



## What's In

### GREEN MATERIALS



Raw fruit and vegetable peelings and scraps



Fresh grass clippings, fresh plant trimmings



Coffee grounds, eggshells (crushed), tea leaves, tea bags

### BROWN MATERIALS



Cardboard egg cartons



Dry leaves



Shredded paper

- Cardboard (tear into small pieces)
- Coffee filters
- Dry grass clippings
- Paper towels and napkins
- Shredded newspaper
- Straw
- Twigs and small brush
- Wood chips and shavings



## What's Out\*



Dairy products



Grains, bread, rice and pasta



Cooked foods and leftovers



Meat, poultry, fish and bones

- Fats and oils
- Invasive plant species
- Pesticide-treated grass clippings
- Pet waste and cat litter
- Weeds gone to seed, and diseased plants

\*These materials require very high heat to compost effectively. Don't throw these in the garbage, use your Green Bin or ensure you have a composter that is designed for these materials. Refer to the manufacturer guide.