



Home Composting

Turn Yard Waste into Gardener's Gold!

Member communities: *Farmington, Farmington Hills, Novi, Southfield, South Lyon, Walled Lake, and Wixom.*

Compost bins - Where to find them:

English Gardens

Royal Oak/Troy
West Bloomfield
Clinton Twp
Dearborn Heights
Eastpointe

Bordine Nursery

Rochester Hills
Clarkston
Grand Blanc
Brighton

Costco/Sam's Club

check availability

Smith & Hawkin

Birmingham or online

Check your local plant nursery or home and garden store.



What is Composting?

Composting is nature's way of recycling nutrients. As plants grow, they absorb nutrients from the soil. When they eventually die and decay, the nutrients are returned to the soil. Backyard composting is a way to recapture these nutrients to enrich your yard or garden. When the leaves and grass clips decompose, they become humus, or compost.

Through the Curbside Yard Waste programs your yard waste is taken to a large-scale compost site where it decomposes and becomes a rich, black humus. Backyard composting can be done at home. Both methods keep yard waste out of landfills and produce a reusable by-product.

Why Should We Compost?

As of 1995, Michigan law prohibits disposal of yard waste in landfills. This means that we must use alternate methods to handle yard waste. Each year RRRASOC residents generate 80,000 tons of waste. At least 30% of that waste can be composted. Composting at home not only cuts down on our dependence on trucks to haul yard waste to large-scale compost sites, but it also provides us with our own source of rich humus to reuse in our gardens.

Benefits of Compost:

- Soil conditioner. Mix compost into soil to give it better structure and water movement.
- Mix it into the first few inches of soil in flower beds and containers. Compost helps plant roots penetrate the soil and hold water in the soil.
- Use it as a top soil for new sod or grass seed. Compost acts a slow-release fertilizer to nourish your plants.
- Sprinkle sifted compost over your lawn to fertilize it.

Turn over for easy home composting directions →

Getting Started

1. Check with your local DPW to determine if your city has any regulations on composting. Some cities do not allow wooden bins or food scraps to be added to the compost.
2. Choose a location. You'll want your compost pile to be easily accessible and near your garden. Avoid low-lying areas. You may also want to keep your neighbors and aesthetics in mind.
3. Make or buy a bin. You can build one out of chicken wire or old pallets. There are also several landscape supply stores that sell pre-made compost bins at a very reasonable cost.

What to Compost - Basic Formula

- 50% BROWN material (carbon): dried leaves, straw
- 25% GREEN material (nitrogen): fresh grass clips, green leaves, weeds without seeds, fruit and vegetable peels, coffee grounds
- 25% soil or compost. This will introduce the decomposing organisms to the compost pile.
- Water. Keep the pile as moist as a wrung-out sponge.

Composting no-nos: meat, fish, dairy, cooked food, animal waste, garlic mustard (an invasive weed) and black walnut leaves.

Assembling the Compost Pile

Layer the brown (carbon), green (nitrogen) and soil. Add water to dampen as you build your pile. Continue your layers of brown, green and soil like layers of a lasagna. Build your pile until it is 3-4' high.

The more time you put into your bin, the faster the results will be. You may want to turn your compost pile once a week to speed the decay process, but you don't have to.

Composting does not smell if it is done properly. If your pile is creating odors, add more carbon material.



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