

POWER UP YOUR SOIL WITH COMPOST

Compost recycles the waste you create and reduces the amount of waste being diverted to landfills. Instead of throwing away your kitchen and yard scraps, save them! By adding compost to your garden, you're giving nutrients back to nature without any added chemicals. Compost organically fertilizes soil, making it ideal for your plants to grow. We have used three different techniques of creating compost in our garden. Pick the best way to compost, depending on the space and time you have available. If you want to start composting but are unsure what to use, refer to the following website, which provides lists of what to and not to compost.

www.compostinfo.com/tutorial/CanICompostIt.htm

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RATIO: In compost it's important to have a mixture of "green" and "brown" materials. "Green" materials are the nitrogen-rich materials. These include: kitchen scraps, coffee grinds, tea bags, grass clippings, hair, or fresh green leaves. The "brown" materials are carbon-rich. These include: dried leaves and grass, woody stalks of plants (such as sunflowers), paper and wood products, dryer lint, straw, and wood ash. To have successful compost, it's important to have a mixture of both. (This mixture also helps reduce odor!) The recommended ratio is 3:1 (carbon: nitrogen).

3 BIN SYSTEM: If you have a good amount of space, the 3 bin system is an easy and efficient way to compost. This system is designed to compost a large amount of material in a short amount of time! In this system there are three different bins, each one is designated to your compost at a certain stage. The first bin on the end should be used for your beginning compost. When the bin seems full, "turn" your compost by moving it into the second bin. This allows you to start a new compost pile in the first bin and allow your second pile to continue to decompose. When it is fully decomposed and ready to use, "turn" it and move it to the third bin.

HEAP/PILE: Heap or pile compost is good for people who don't have a lot of space. With this method, you simply make a pile with your compost and turn it occasionally with a pitch for or rake. Worms naturally enter your pile, helping the decomposition process. To make sure no unwanted "guests" get into your pile, outline it with chicken wire. eartheasy.com/grow_compost.html

COMPOST TEA: Compost tea is good for lawns and hard to reach areas. To make compost tea, submerge compost in dechlorinated water for one to two days. Once steeped, apply this to your plants. The benefit of compost tea is its liquid form: it immediately releases nutrients into the plants' roots. The bacterial population, grows from 1 billion in a teaspoon of compost to 4 billion in a teaspoon of an actively aerated compost tea. kitchengardeners.org/questions/how-do-i-make-compost-tea

TO SEE OUR DIFFERENT TYPES OF COMPOSTING & THE BENEFITS IT HAS HAD IN OUR GARDEN, VISIT US AT THE SUSTAINABLE BACKYARD DEMONSTRATION GARDENS AT LONG HILL.



www.thetrustees.org

