

Home Composting Checklist

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Companion to “How to compost at home” — print it, tape it to the bin, check things off.



1 • SET UP YOUR SYSTEM

- ☐ Pick a shady spot on bare soil, near water and close to the kitchen
- ☐ Choose your composter: open bin, tumbler, worm bin, bokashi, trench, or electric
- ☐ Lay a 4-inch base layer of browns (dried leaves, shredded cardboard)
- ☐ Stock a browns stash by the bin so every scrap dump gets covered

The recipe: 2-3 parts **BROWNS** : 1 part **GREENS**

Moisture like a wrung-out sponge · Turn every 1-2 weeks · Done when dark & crumbly

2 • ADD GREENS (NITROGEN)

- ☐ Fruit & vegetable scraps
- ☐ Coffee grounds & paper filters
- ☐ Fresh grass clippings
- ☐ Crushed eggshells
- ☐ Tea bags (no staples)

3 • ADD BROWNS (CARBON)

- ☐ Dried leaves
- ☐ Shredded newspaper & cardboard
- ☐ Straw or hay
- ☐ Sawdust (untreated wood)
- ☐ Paper towel & napkin tubes

4 • KEEP OUT OF THE PILE

- ☐ Meat, fish & dairy (open bins)
- ☐ Fats, oils & grease
- ☐ Pet waste
- ☐ Diseased plants & weeds gone to seed
- ☐ Pesticide-treated material
- ☐ Black walnut leaves (juglone)

5 • WEEKLY CARE

- ☐ Turn or tumble the pile to add oxygen
- ☐ Check moisture — squeeze test: a few drops, not a stream
- ☐ Bury fresh scraps in the center under 6 inches of browns

6 • QUICK FIXES

Smells sour:

Too wet or too many greens → add browns, turn

Not breaking down:

Too dry or too carbon-heavy → add water & greens

Flies:

Bury food under at least 6 inches of browns

Cold & slow in winter:

Normal — keeps working; insulate with straw