

Home composting



HOME COMPOSTING

Compostable material can account for up to one half of your household waste. By producing home compost you can have a major impact on waste reduction from your home and benefit the environment.

WHY COMPOST?

The benefits to composting include:

For the environment:

- Reduces waste & pollution
- Reduces peat based compost in the garden and helps save our bogs
- Reduces the use of chemical fertilisers and helps save our non renewable resources
- Reduces greenhouse gases by reducing the burning of waste

For soil and plants:

- Improves soil fertility
- Improves plant health
- Improves drainage on heavy soils
- Improves the waster holding capacity of lighter soils
- Improves soil aeration
- Makes the soil easier to work
- Enlivens the soil by feeding soil organisms
- Acts as a slow release fertiliser
- Adds trace elements to the soil
- Increases the pH of the soil

HOW TO COMPOST:

Composting depends on bringing together the materials that you want to compost, in roughly the right proportions. There are basically two types:

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- “Greens”: the wet, soft, green materials (high in nitrogen), and
- “Browns”: dry, harder absorbent materials (high in carbon)

BROWNS

Cardboard
 Scrunched up or shredded paper
 Kitchen roll or napkins
 Dried leaves
 Small woody prunings from the garden

GREENS

Fresh UNCOOKED fruit & vegetables
 Garden waste (grass clippings, green leaves, soft prunings etc)
 Plant prunings
 Fruit waste
 Teabags

- Collect as many browns and greens as possible to start your pile. Larger compost piles tend to hold more moisture and decompose faster.
- Try to mix equal proportions of browns and greens into the heap.
- Soak well with water to create uniform dampness (damp as a rung out sponge), cover the pile with a lid and if possible turn the pile every once in a while.
- Place your home composter in a sunny spot. This will help speed up the process.
- Place in a well-drained area to allow excess water to drain away.
- Place on open soil so that worms can get in and help break down the contents.
- Try to rotate the material in the compost bin to allow air to get through and to mix up the material.

The compost should take between 9 – 12 months to be ready for use. When it is ready it will have a spongy texture and be dark brown in colour. It is rich in nutrients and will be excellent for use in your garden, plant pots or window boxes!

What not to compost:

Glass, tins, plastic – these will never compost!
 Cooked foods, meat and fish
 Cheese, fats and grease (they can attract unwanted pests)
 Roots of any perennial weeds such as ground elder, couch grass, dock and dandelions
 Any diseased plants
 Animal bedding
 Animal waste

Antrim Borough Council sell home composters to residents for £9.75, or free to households without a brown bin, this includes free delivery. To order a composter today either download our order form and post to Council with a cheque, or telephone 9446 3113 and order direct with a credit or debit card.