

Why Compost?



Reduce food waste



Reduce greenhouse gases



Build healthy soil



Improve water holding capacity in soil



Reduce need for chemical fertilizers



Grow your own food



Keep resources local to your community



Compost together to build community

GET INVOLVED

Join our growing network of composters!

There's no better way to do so than by volunteering some time processing compost or by educating community members on their composting options.

lacompost.org | [@lacompost](https://twitter.com/lacompost)

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Connect

Follow [@lacompost](https://twitter.com/lacompost) on social media and tag us in your composting photos. You can also use the hashtag [#soilandpeople](https://twitter.com/soilandpeople).

Volunteer

We have volunteer opportunities available for a diverse range of interests and availabilities. More at: lacompost.org/volunteer

Drop Off

Dropping off compost at a farmer's market or compost hub is an easy way to reduce your household food waste, connect to your community, and promote healthy soils in LA. More at: lacompost.org/join

Learn

Attend a workshop to learn more about the process of composting and how you can start composting at home. More at: lacompost.org/events

Donate

Support our mission by making a donation to LA Compost. More at: lacompost.org/donate

More Composting Tips

compostjunkie.com
smartgardening.com
ilsr.org/composting



LA COMPOST

SOIL & PEOPLE

Compost Guide

What Do We Need to Compost?



Browns (Carbon)

Allows airflow throughout the pile and provides energy for organisms.



Mulch/wood chips



Dead leaves (brown leaf)



Sawdust (from untreated wood)



Twigs (break into 2-3" pieces)



Newspaper and shredded paper



Unbleached paper towels and napkins

Greens (Nitrogen)

Provides both protein and moisture for organisms.



Fruit and vegetable scraps



Coffee grounds & tea bags (no nylon bags)



Egg shells (shell only)



Green leaves



Grass trimmings



Old flowers

For a healthy compost pile you will need a good balance of air and water.

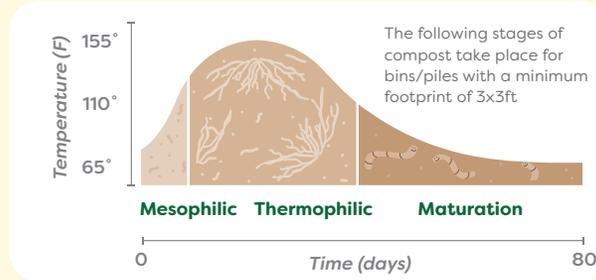
Oxygen

Allows for organisms to survive while keeping the pile odor free.

Water

Allows organisms to move around and digest material.

Stages of Compost



STAGE 1: Mesophilic

First few days

Pile contains moderate temp (65° -100° F) and organisms begin to work on easy to digest materials.

STAGE 2: Thermophilic

2-3 weeks

As material is being digested, the pile heats up (130° -155° F) and difficult to digest materials are broken down.

STAGE 3: Curing/ Maturation

6-8+ weeks

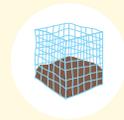
Microbial activity and decomposition begins to slow down. Compost is finished when dark brown and ambient temp (80° -110° F).

Types of Compost Systems



Plastic Bin

Often available at city/county workshops. Great for residential use.



Wire Bins

A simple way to make a large bin but can dry out more easily.



Worm Bins

Small footprint that can process food scraps quickly. Keep in shady/cool area.



Compost Tumbler

Hand crank to make mixing compost easier. Watch air vents to prevent blockage.



Wooden and Pallet Bins

Great community bin for processing large amounts.



Covered Piles

Can vary in size, ensure pile has equal parts carbon to nitrogen and is covered.

Frequently Asked Questions



What do I do if my compost pile smells?

Your pile should be turned and more browns should be added.



Why is my pile not getting hot?

You may need to add more green materials to the bin or water. Also, ensure that your bin is large enough for the organisms to do their work. If using a worm bin or bin that is less than 1 cubic yard, your bin will not heat up too much, but you will still create something of value.



How long does it take to finish?

It depends on what process you're using. The more you turn and water, the more quickly it goes. Our community compost hubs take about three months to generate finished material. Compost is finished when it is a dark chocolate color like coffee grounds, no longer hot, and smells earthy.



Will critters and pests be attracted to it?

Make sure your compost is covered with mulch or enclosed in a bin to prevent critters and pests.



Can you compost meat, dairy, and cooked food?

You can in a large facility, but it is not ideal for small scale home or community composting, as they will more likely attract pests. Please exclude them from our sites.



Can you compost pesticides and GMO's?

It depends, more studies are needed. The compost process decomposes many toxic chemicals but not the persistent ones. Eliminate toxins upstream—from your landscape and daily meals.