



Composting - Fact Sheet

What is composting?

Composting is the common name we give to the natural decomposition of organic matter (anything that was once alive), into a soil-like material called 'humus' or 'compost'. This process of decomposition occurs through the action of beneficial microscopic organisms, and other living creatures in healthy soils.

Composting organic matter, such as food and garden waste, can be undertaken at your home, school or workplace through the use of a compost bin or heap.

Why compost?

Through composting food and garden waste we can dramatically reduce the amount of organic waste sent to landfill in everyday rubbish. By reducing organic waste to landfill we can reduce the potential for landfills to create liquid 'leachate' which can pollute our streams, oceans and underground water, and reduce the production of methane gas which is a powerful greenhouse gas.

"Compost is a nutrient rich material ideal for use as a natural fertiliser for your gardens."

Transforming food and garden waste into rich black soil through your own compost at home, school or workplace, is extremely useful and satisfying.

Managing a compost heap or bin is a great way to educate kids on a myriad of topics including maths, spelling, art, biology and soil chemistry, as well as teaching responsibility, promoting feelings of self confidence and a link to nature, and enabling direct experiential learning.

How is composting done?

Various organic materials including food scraps, grass clippings, woody vegetation and other organic materials are mixed together in a compost bin or heap. Under the correct conditions, beneficial microbes and other small creatures will begin to actively decompose the material. Over time, your waste will be turned into nutrient-rich soil-like compost.

A good way to learn the basics of composting is with the name **ADAM**:

Aliveness - composting is a 'living' process and requires active microbes and organisms.

Diversity - the more different types of organic ingredients that go into your compost, the more beneficial the finished compost will be for your plants.

Aeration - you must keep your compost bin aerated at all times. A good spiral-mixing tool can ensure good aeration of the pile.

Moisture - you must keep your compost heap moist at all times to keep it working efficiently.

For more information visit www.ecohouseandgarden.com.au, email us at info@ecohouseandgarden.com.au or contact us via the Kimbriki Resource Recovery Centre on 02 9486 3512 (Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday).



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For homes or workplaces with food waste, but little garden waste, a worm farm may be more appropriate. Visit www.ecohouseandgarden.com.au or see Kimbriki Eco House and Garden's Worm Farming fact sheet for more information.

Composting facts

- Composting recycles food scraps, garden waste and other organic wastes into humus; commonly referred to as compost.
- Humus is the richest and most important part of all soils.
- Composting reduces organic waste in landfill, helping to reduce issues surrounding leachate and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Compost, or humus helps to lock carbon (upon which all living organisms are based) into the soil thus reducing carbon dioxide (the gaseous form of carbon) in the atmosphere.
- The high level of microbial activity in compost boosts beneficial microbes within your soil which, in turn, assists plants to strengthen their immune systems.
- Applying compost to your garden allows soils to breathe, ensuring plants are healthy and vibrant.
- Mature compost applied to your garden increases the water holding capacity of the soil.
- Compost holds a smorgasbord of different nutrients (food) for plants.
- There are many different types of compost bins. A good understanding of the process of composting will allow you to be successful regardless of the bin type you choose.

*To learn more about composting come along to one of
Kimbriki Eco House and Garden's [The Art of Composting](#) workshops.*

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