

Compost Checklist

By Lauren Meir

- Compost OK:
 - Leaves and twigs
 - Yard trimmings and grass clippings
 - Houseplants
 - Wood chips
 - Hay and straw
 - Sawdust
 - Fruits and vegetables
 - Eggshells and nutshells
 - Tea bags, coffee grounds and filters
 - Animal manure (from horses or cows only)
 - Hair and fur
 - Cardboard rolls
 - Shredded newspaper
 - Dryer lint and vacuum lint
 - Cotton and wool rags
 - Fireplace ashes
- Compost No-No's
 - Yard trimmings treated with pesticides
 - Dairy products
 - Meat or fish bones or scraps
 - Fats, oils, grease or lard
 - Pet Feces (from dogs, cats, or other pets)
 - Black walnut tree leaves or twigs Black walnut trees release a substance during decomposition that may be harmful to other organisms.
 - Coal or charcoal ash
- Compost Completed!
 - Your compost pile is done when all compost material is a uniform, crumbly product that emits an earthy aroma.
 - Casual composting. Your pile could be "done" anywhere from 2 months to a year
 - Gourmet composting Your pile could be "done" in about 2-4 months.

- Any larger wood chunks can be filtered out and put back into a new pile.
- Compost Composition
 - Browns.** Includes dead leaves, animal manure, branches and twigs
 - Greens.** Includes grass clippings, fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds and tea bags
 - Water.** Your compost pile should always be moist! A dry compost pile is sick! Hydrate it!
- Composting Techniques
 - Casual vs "Gourmet" composting** Casual takes longer, but is easier to manage and the pile will not get as hot.
 - There are a variety of options you have in composting within both the casual and gourmet techniques** Research in order to find the method that works best for you.
- Tools You'll Need:
 - Water hose with an adjustable spray head
 - Pitchfork. They're not just for farmers anymore!
 - Shovel
 - Rake (optional)
- Casual Compost Option:
 - Pick a place for your pile** It should be a dry, shady area near a water source.
 - Add browns and greens as you collect them** Ensure larger pieces are chopped or shredded first.
 - Dampen dry materials as you add them.** Make sure your pile is moist!
 - After your compost pile has been created, mix green waste and grass clippings into the pile**
 - Bury fruit and vegetable scraps under 10 inches of compost material**
 - When the substance at the bottom of the pile is dark and rich in color, your compost pile is ready to use!**