

# 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!**