

COMPOSTING TIPS

As soon as decomposition begins, the volume of the pile will decrease. Don't be tempted to add more materials at this point, as this resets the clock on that batch.

You will maximize your composting efforts if you aerate by turning or mixing the heap about once a week.

Finished compost is usually less than half the volume of the materials you started with, but it's much denser. When finished, it should look, feel and smell like rich, dark soil. You should not be able to recognize any of the items you originally placed in the pile.

Common Problems

- If the compost is too wet, turn it more frequently or add dry brown material.
- If the pile doesn't heat up, add more green material to the compost, or you may need to aerate or add water.
- If there is an ammonia or rotten egg smell, turn the compost or add brown material to dry it out.
- If large amounts of dropped apples or kitchen scraps attract wasps or other unwelcome pests, turn more frequently.

Using Finished Compost

- Mix compost into the soil to improve it.
- Spread compost on lawn to fill in low spots.
- Use as much mulch for landscaping and gardening.
- Mix compost into pots for potted plants.



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SUPPORTERS



MOORHEAD
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COMPOSTING: Basic Information and Make Your Own Workshop



MAKE YOUR OWN COMPOST TUMBLER WORKSHOP

Save water, money, time and maintenance costs by using yard waste to benefit you and your soil. This workshop will cover the basics of composting and provide instruction to construct various composting systems. By tumbling this composter around the yard once or twice a week, you could have a barrel full of compost by the end of the season.

2020 Workshops

April 27, 2020
6:00-8:00 p.m.
At a Moorhead Park

May 20, 2020
6:00-8:00 p.m.
At a Fargo Park

Fee: \$59 (includes supplies)

Cass and Clay County residents may be eligible for partial reimbursement of fee; information will be available upon completion of the workshop.

Come prepared to carry home an empty 55-gallon compost bin.

To register: Contact Moorhead Community Education at <https://www.moorheadschoools.org/schools/alternative-schools/community-education/> or call 218.284.3400.



Compost is decomposed organic material, such as leaves, grass clippings, and kitchen waste. It provides many essential nutrients for plant growth and therefore is often used as fertilizer. Compost also improves soil structure so that soil can easily hold the correct amount of moisture and air. Compost improves the texture of both clay soils and sandy soils, making either type rich, moisture-retentive, and loamy.



Benefits

- Reduction in garbage volume
- A rich natural fertilizer, cuts back on use of chemical fertilizers
- Improves soil aeration
- Enhances water retention in soils
- Helps control weeds
- Decreases the need for costly water
- And many more!
- Reduces use of a garbage disposal which can lower phosphorus in wastewater



WHAT CAN BE COMPOSTED?

Key materials are nitrogen-rich 'greens' and carbon-rich 'browns,' water, and air.

Examples of greens are:

- Green leaves
- Coffee grounds/filters
- Tea bags
- Plant trimming
- Fruit (including dropped apples) and vegetable scraps, egg shells and fresh grass clippings



Examples of browns are:

- Dead plants
- Sawdust from untreated lumber
- Twigs
- Dried grasses, weeds, straw and leaves

Water allows microbes in your compost to grow and help decompose material. The compost should be moist. Air adds in decomposition and controls odors.

A RECIPE IS 1 PART GREEN TO 4 PARTS BROWN.

What not to compost:

Meat, fish, and animal fats

These materials may attract unwanted visitors to your compost pile.

Shredded newspapers or office paper

The paper may contain chemicals that are not good for your compost. Recycle them instead.

Ashes from your grill

Wood ashes can be useful in small quantities, but BBQ grill ashes never go into your compost pile.

Dog and cat feces

These materials can add diseases to your compost and they have an unpleasant odor.

Sawdust from treated lumber

Sometimes lumber is treated with harmful chemicals.