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Composting Methods Made Easy

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Many are intimidated by the process of compost and at times the smell. But great compost can be achieved without the odor, expensive composting contraptions or headaches that go along with it.

There are no mess composting methods that require no containers, watering or aeration methods. The no mess type of composting is by far the easiest form of composting. And the end result is the same as any other composting methods – happy, healthy, thriving plants.

If having a compost container to put in kitchen scraps and yard clippings on a regular basis is appealing, then there are some containers that can be made out of just about anything. In fact, materials could be found with a good look around a cluttered garage or a scrap yard. All that is needed is a few recycled scrap materials made from mesh wire, scrap wood, bricks, cinder blocks, or a combination of those building materials. There are pre-made composting bins that have additional features and are available at many garden centers. However, these types can be costly. But they are available and should be mentioned.

No Mess Composting

The no mess composting strategy takes the guess work out of composting and allows Nature to do what it does best. These strategies require no special compost containers, aeration methods or weekly waterings. The benefit to this method is it takes the compost straight to the root where it needs the nourishment the most. However, it does not allow you to add more composting layers like composting containers can:

- Trench Composting - All that is required is to dig a twelve inch “trench” or hole near the plants that will use the compost. Add four to six inches of “brown” and “green” composting material and bury it with the reserved soil.
- Sheet Composting – Place organic matter to be composted directly on to the soil as a form of mulch and allow it to decay naturally. One or more layers can be added. Water thoroughly and allow the decomposition process to begin. New plants can be planted in the area in the next season.

[Source - www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org) ^[1])

4 Easy Ways to Build A Composter

These compost bins can be made with scraps laying around the garage or a quick trip up to Home Depot or Garden Center.

Wood Framed Composter

Some gardeners build wooden frames to put their compost material in. This type of composter is relatively inexpensive and easy to put together. However, wood can rot over time.

- Using scrap wood or old packing skids that are 4 ft. wide, 4 ft. high form a square shape.
- Screw or wire the corners of the 4 frames together to secure a rigid frame.
- Support beams can be added for additional support.
- Chicken wire can be placed inside the beams and secured with duct tape or an epoxy.
- Place the composting material in and alternate the brown material and the green material.

Simple Wire Compost Bin

This method is used in winterizing fruit and nut trees by forming a hollow circle with chicken wire and placing leaves and grass clippings inside to insulate the trees for the cold months. This type of compost bin is inexpensive and easily made.

- Use galvanized wire 4 ft high and 5 ft long. The size can be larger or smaller given the amount of compost you want.
- Form a circular shape and secure with wire.
- Leave the composter alone for 6 months and then pop the wire off in the spring.

Plastic Container Composter

If a lot of compost is not needed, this method is the best. Dark containers work best. Darker colors absorb heat more than lighter colored ones.

- Take a plastic container (with lid) no smaller than 18 gallons, and drill plenty of holes that are 2 inches apart (lid, bottom, and sides) to get air circulation in.
- Cut up the composting materials into small pieces and place them in the bin. The composting bin can be placed on the patio or near the kitchen.
- Every day or so, aerate the bin by giving it a good shake.

Trash Can Composter

This is another inexpensive type of composter that can be used for small space gardening. A darker colored trash can is recommended so attain more heat absorption.

- Take a plastic trash can (32 gallon) or a metal trash can if rats are a concern.
- Drill 2-3 inch drill bit, drill holes all around the trash can 6 to 12 inches apart. Cover holes with window screening. Duct tape or epoxy will secure the screening.
- Place trash can in a convenient place. The composter can also be placed on bricks to allow for more air circulation of the contents inside.

([Source – www.about.com](http://www.about.com) ^[2])

Compost is a gift that keeps on giving. With a little creativity, ingenuity and hard work, a compost container or hole for compost can be made to condition the soil. And the plants will thank you for it with every vegetable and fruit it bears.

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[1] Source - www.wikipedia.org: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Home_composting

[2] Source – www.about.com:

<http://organicgardening.about.com/od/compost/tp/compostingmethods.htm>

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