

RESOURCES

FREE WORKSHOPS

The University of California Cooperative Extension, in conjunction with Placer County Solid Waste Management, Nevada County Department of Transportation & Sanitation, and Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District offers practical composting workshops and short courses. Check our website at ceplacervevada.ucdavis.edu for details.

COMPOSTING BROCHURES

Warm Composting and Other Methods

Let's Look at Bin Plans (designs)
Compost in a Hurry. UC ANR publication. Download at <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/pdf/8037.pdf>

BOOKS

Backyard Composting, 1992. Harmonious Technologies, Harmonious Press, Ojai, CA, 96 pp.

Rudale Book of Composting, 1992. G. Gershuny, Saint Martin's Press, New York, NY, 278 pp.

Worms Eat My Garbage, 1982. Mary Appelhof, Flower Press, Kalamazoo, MI, 100 pp.

FOR COMPOST QUESTIONS:

Call the University of California Cooperative Extension Master Composter **ROTLINE** at (530) 889-7399 (Placer Co.), (530) 273-0919 (Nevada Co.), for other RECYCLING INFORMATION, call (530) 889-7417.

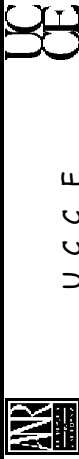
University of California COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

11477 E Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603
(530) 889-7385
FAX (530) 889-7397
e-mail: ceplacerv@ucdavis.edu
256 S. Auburn Street
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 273-0919
FAX (530) 273-4769
e-mail: cevevada@ucdavis.edu

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PLACER AND NEVADA COUNTIES

COMPOST EDUCATION PROGRAM



TURN YOUR GARBAGE INTO GOLD! IT'S EASY, IT'S SMART, IT'S RECYCLING.

BASIC COMPOSTING

WHY COMPOST?

Composting is nature's way of recycling. It is a satisfying way to turn your fruit, vegetable and yard trimmings into a dark, crumbly, sweet-smelling soil conditioner.

COMPOSTING:

- ✓ Saves you money by lowering garbage bills and replacing storebought soil conditioners.
- ✓ Helps garden and house plants by improving the fertility and health of your soil.
- ✓ Saves water by helping the soil hold moisture and reducing water runoff.
- ✓ Benefits the environment by recycling valuable organic resources and extending the life of our landfill.

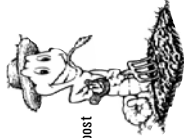


COMPOST WORKS FOR YOU

Not only does composting help the environment, but it can help your garden, yard, and house plants too! When compost looks like soil and smells sweet and earthy, it is ready to use. Here are some of the most common ways to use compost.

IN THE GARDEN

Before planting, mix a 3 to 4 inch layer of compost into newly reclaimed or poor soils. Mix a ½ to three inch layer of compost into annual garden beds at least once a year. Compost will add nutrients and beneficial microbes, hold water, and improve plant growth.



AROUND THE YARD

Spread a one to four inch layer of coarse compost on soil as a mulch, or spread a ½-inch layer of sifted, weedseed-free compost on turfgrass as a topdressing. These can be done any time of year to improve soil fertility and reduce watering needs.



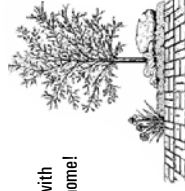
ON HOUSEPLANTS

Sprinkle a thin layer of compost over houseplant soil to provide nutrients. You can also make a great potting soil by mixing one part compost with one part sand, 1 part ground bark and one part soil or peat moss.



DON'T HAVE A GARDEN?

You can still make compost and use it on a house plant, give it to a friend, sprinkle it around a street tree, or use it in a community garden.



THE 4 "R'S" OF THE YARD

REDUCE the amount of yard trimmings you make by planting slow-growing, drought-tolerant plants.

REUSE yard trimmings by grasscycling (*mowing more often, and leaving the clippings on the lawn*) and by mulching fallen leaves and clipped prunings (*spread them 3-4 inches deep on paths and around trees and shrubs*).

RECYCLE remaining yard trimmings by *composting*. This brochure shows you how.

RESTORE the environment with thriving gardens. It all starts at home!

CHOOSE A SYSTEM

SYSTEMS FOR FOOD & YARD TRIMMINGS

Bins

- For fruit, vegetable, and yard trimmings (using "Mixed" compost recipe)
- For yard trimmings alone (using "No-Fuss" recipe)

Bins require a lid, floor, and no holes bigger than ¼-inch in diameter

Open Piles & Simple Bins

- For yard trimmings
- Requires "Active" composting (chopping and weekly turning to keep animals out)

Usually inexpensive or free

Bury food waste in the middle of the pile, cover w/6-12" of plant material

SYSTEMS FOR JUST FOOD TRIMMINGS

For more information about the following, see the brochure, *Warm Composting*.

Worm Bins

- Most fun! Takes some time and effort
- For indoors or outdoors
- Produces excellent fertilizer

Closed-Air Systems

- Low maintenance
- Prono to odor and insect problems

Underground Composting

- Requires digging a hole each time you add new materials
- No harvesting necessary

FOLLOW THE BASICS



- Most sawdusts
- Chopped, woody prunings
- Pine needles
- Fallen leaves

- Fea bags
- Strus rinds
- Buffe grounds and filters
- Lawn clippings and young weeds

- Fruit and vegetable trimmings
- Herbivore manures

DON'T COMPOST

- Meat, bones or fish
- Dairy products or grease
- Bag, cat or bird feces
- Sawdust from plywood/treated wood
- Diseased plants
- Pernicious weeds such as bermuda grass, ivy, oxalis bulbs, burr clover

Thanks to friendly bugs and worms, composting is as easy as "1-2-3" — no matter which recipe you use.

- CHOP materials if you want them to break down more quickly.
 - MIX "browns" (dry, woody materials) with "greens" (moist, green materials).
 - MAINTAIN air and water balance by keeping compost as moist as a wrung-out sponge.
- Browns, Greens, Air & Water are the **big four** that will keep every compost pile happy.
- HOT COMPOST HAPPENS** when you follow the basic "1-2-3" carefully, and the pile is about a cubic yard (3'x3'x3'). Heat can accelerate composting and kill weed seeds and plant diseases, but is *not necessary*. Cold, slow piles are just as good. If your pile is large enough, moist, and well chopped, but not heating up, you can turn it and mix in some greens like grass clippings or an organic nitrogen fertilizer. For faster hot composting and better weed-seed kill, turn or mix your hot pile about once a week.



"NO-FUSS" COMPOST"

For yard trimmings:

Ingredients:

Yard trimmings only (browns and greens), water as needed.

Directions:

Feed chopped or unchopped yard trimmings into bin as you generate them.
Maintain compost by keeping as moist as a wrung-out sponge.
Harvest rich, brown, finished compost from the bottom and center of the pile after 12 to 18 months.



"MIXED" COMPOST"

For fruit, vegetable and yard trimmings together

Ingredients:

Fruit, vegetable and yard trimmings (browns and greens), water as needed

Directions:

Feed yard trimmings to your pile as you generate them by chopping them first into pieces 6" or smaller. Food scraps need to be buried and mixed into the center of the pile. NEVER dump and run! Be sure to mix in enough browns to balance your greens. Feed as often as you like.
Maintain compost by turning or mixing it about once a week. Keep it moist as a wrung-out sponge.
Harvest rich, brown, finished compost by sifting out coarse, unfinished materials after 3 to 8 months.



TROUBLESHOOTING

Symptoms	Problems	Solutions
Pile not composting	Too dry	Add water until slightly damp and turn (mix)
Pile smells rotten/ attracts flies	Too much brown water	Add fresh green matter or organic nitrogen fertilizer and turn
	Too wet/too many food scraps or lawn clippings	Turn and add browns (dry, woody materials) or dry soil
	Food scraps exposed	Bury and mix food scraps into pile
	Non-compostables	Remove meat, dairy, grease, etc. and turn
Rodents in pile	Food scraps in open bin/holes larger than ¼-inch/non-compostables	Use traps or baits, rodent-proof bin, remove meat, grease, etc. and turn