

## What you can compost

Fruit & vegetable scraps, peels and cores  
Leaves  
Plants  
Weeds (without ripe seeds)  
Cut flowers  
Coffee grounds  
Teabags  
Grass clippings  
Wood shavings (not treated)  
Egg shells (crushed)  
Shredded paper

## What not to compost

Treated wood  
Plywood  
Paper towels & facial tissue  
Meat & meat bones  
Fish & fish bones  
Plastics  
Metals  
Fats and oils  
Dairy products  
Pet waste  
Cheese, meat and other sauces

[www.compost.org](http://www.compost.org)

## Questions?

[www.quinterecycling.org](http://www.quinterecycling.org)

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## Need Supplies?

## We've got you covered!

Backyard Composters

Kitchen Compost Pails

# BACKYARD Composting Basics



## In the kitchen

Put kitchen scraps in a bucket with a tight-fitting lid.



Include fruit, cooked or raw vegetables, tea bags, coffee grounds, cut flowers, coffee filters, egg shells.



Do not include meat, fish, bones, oils, salad dressing or dairy products.



Cutting large food scraps into smaller pieces will speed up the process.

Empty the bucket into your composter.

## In the yard

Kitchen scraps and grass clippings contain **NITROGEN**.

Leaves and wood shavings contain **CARBON**.

Composters work best with a mixture of these, about **50/50**.

## What compost needs

Composting is done by tiny microbes that break down the material.

Like all living things, microbes need air and water.

Mix your kitchen and yard scraps regularly, using a pitchfork or a broom handle.

This will allow air to get into your compost.

Make sure your compost is not too wet or too dry. It should be as moist as a well wrung-out sponge.

## Where to put your composter

The best way to make composting a daily routine is to put your composter somewhere convenient. That will encourage you to keep composting even in the winter. It may freeze, but will thaw in the spring and keep working.

Putting your composter in a sunny place helps keep the internal temperature up.

Your composter will work best placed directly on the ground, not on a patio or concrete pad. Micro-organisms come up from the soil to help the process.

Try to put your composter on soil that drains well.



## Trouble-shooting

**“Rotten egg” smell** - too much water or too little air. Add some dry material such as peat moss or sawdust and stir (mix) your compost

**“Ammonia” smell** - too much nitrogen-rich material, especially grass clippings. Add carbon-rich material such as leaves, peat moss or sawdust (but not from pressure-treated lumber) and mix well. Stir frequently for a few days until the odour goes away.

**Pest-proofing** - if you're attracting critters, place rocks around the base of your composter to discourage digging. Or line your composter with 1/4" wire mesh or hardware cloth. It should cover the bottom completely and go up the sides.

Meat, fish, bones, oil and dairy products will attract animals.

## Where to get a composter

Garden centres, some building centres and hardware stores, or Quinte Waste Solutions

Or build your own. Composters can be made of old pallets, or something as simple as chicken wire attached to stakes. Leaf and yard waste can simply be put into a heap, or enclosed in 2 or 3 rows of concrete blocks.

Remember, composting is a natural process that will happen with or without your help. The container is for your own convenience.