



## PURCHASE A COMPOST BIN

Residents can purchase an Earth Machine compost bin at the Broome County Landfill during normal business hours (Mon-Fri 7am-2:45pm and Sat 7am-11:45am).

This bins cost \$45 including tax.

The Earth Machine compost bins are 32" tall and 32" in diameter. The bin can hold approximately 80 gallons of compost.

Homemade compost bin design instructions are also available on the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County website.



## CONTACT US

Broome County  
Division of Solid Waste Management  
607-778-2250  
Jessica.Brewer@BroomeCounty.us  
[gobroomecounty.com/solidwaste/composting](http://gobroomecounty.com/solidwaste/composting)

Cornell Cooperative Extension  
of Broome County  
607-584-5011  
[jse67@cornell.edu](mailto:jse67@cornell.edu)  
[ccebroomecounty.com/environment/composting](http://ccebroomecounty.com/environment/composting)

Partial funding provided by the New York State  
Department of Environmental Conservation

Broome County  
Division of  
Solid Waste Management

# BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO BACKYARD COMPOSTING

Printed on 100% Recycled Paper





## WHAT CAN BE COMPOSTED

- Fruit & Vegetable Scraps
- Egg Shells
- Coffee Grounds, Tea Bags, & Paper Filters
- Paper Egg Cartons (ripped up)
- Shredded Paper or Newspaper (not glossy)
- Yard Waste (Grass, Leaves, Untreated Wood)

## WHAT NOT TO COMPOST

- Meat, Fish, Bones, Pet Waste
- Dairy Products
- Plants Treated with Pesticides
- Treated Wood
- Plastics
- Cat Litter or Cat & Dog Feces
- Glossy Paper
- Fats & Oils
- Wood & Charcoal Ash
- Produce Stickers

## HOW TO COMPOST

There are four components to your compost that must be managed.

1. **Greens - Nitrogen:** Green materials including yard trimmings, grass clippings, vegetable and fruit scraps (make sure to cover with browns to keep away bees or animals).
2. **Browns - Carbon:** Brown materials like dry leaves, twigs, straw, or shredded newspaper should make up most of your compost. The Browns to Greens ratio should be 3:1 by volume.
3. **Air:** Your compost should be well aerated to allow microorganisms to break down the organic matter. Turn or fluff your compost 2-4 times a month.
4. **Water:** Your compost pile should be moist like a wrung-out sponge. You can test this by squeezing a handful of the material; only a few drops of water should come out. Fix moisture issues by adding more dry brown material to soak up excess moisture.

## CHOOSE THE BEST PLACE FOR YOUR BIN

- Place your compost on level ground and in an area with good drainage
- Avoid placing your bin fully under a tree's canopy, or move the bin annually to prevent root intrusion
- Select a location that can be accessed in all seasons
- Avoid placing your bin near property lines or too close to windows/patios

## HARVESTING COMPOST

Composting can take between 4-12 months depending on management techniques.

Finished compost will be dark, crumbly, and smell earthy. Brown and green materials should be fully decomposed, otherwise the compost can damage plants. To confirm your compost is complete, place a handful in a sealed plastic bag for 2 weeks and check that it still smells earthy.

Apply 1"-2" of finished compost in your garden and mix into the top 6"-10" of soil.

