

How to make amazing COMPOST

COMPOSTING IN THE TROPICS IS AS EASY AS IT IS IN ANY OTHER CLIMATE, PERHAPS EVEN EASIER.

Higher temperatures and humidity help to “cook” your compost brew and maintain adequate moisture levels so that you can have an amazing soil additive with minimal work in no time at all. The optimum ratio for creating a nutrient packed and “alive” compost to feed your garden is 30:1, carbon to nitrogen ingredients and to maintain a moisture level of approximately 50%. The list below outlines some of the best sources of each that you can use.

HIGH CARBON INGREDIENTS






- Straw/hay
- Paper (shredded)
- Newspaper (torn/shredded)
- Cardboard (torn/shredded)
- Sawdust
- Woodchip
- Dry leaves

HIGH NITROGEN INGREDIENTS

- Manure (from herbivores)
- Green garden waste
- Grass clippings
- Kitchen scraps
- Coffee grounds
- Hair
- Seaweed
- Mature compost







Alternate thick layers of high carbon ingredients with thin layers of high nitrogen ingredients to get the ratio correct. If you do have access to mature compost sprinkle some of this between each layer. The compost adds beneficial microbes into your compost to help it break down more easily and quickly. You could also add some compost worms or earthworms into the mix.

Ingredients to use sparingly

-  **Weeds** if the compost doesn't get hot enough the seeds may still be viable and be spread through your garden.
-  **Oils** do not break down easily and can make for a slimy, messy compost if too much added
-  **Breads** do not break down well and also attract pests
-  **Dairy** too much will attract pests and can be very smelly
-  **Fish** unless buried well will attract pests and smell terrible

Ingredients to avoid

Some biodegradable items are best avoided completely in your compost, particularly if you are composting on a smaller scale such as in a suburban yard.

-  **Meat scraps & bones** can contain pathogens and attract pests
-  **Manure from carnivores** can also contain pathogens which, if you are placing the finished compost on food you are growing, can be taken up by the plants
-  **Citrus** take too long to break down
-  **Onions** take too long to break down
-  **Glossy/coated papers** can contain dangerous chemicals which again, can be taken up by your food plants
-  **Diseased plants** putting diseased plants in your compost can further spread the disease through your garden