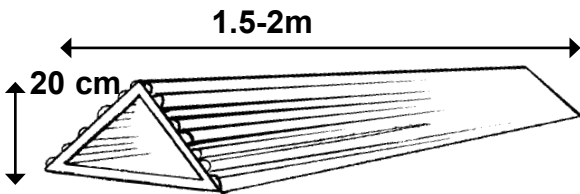


TRIANGLE COMPOST

This is a technique for making compost using an 'air tunnel' for extra oxygenation, which speeds up the composting process. To do this you will need a long triangular frame which you can make by yourself. The 'air tunnel' frame can be made from wood or bamboo of about 20cm tall and 1.5-2m long. Make 2 of these frames and keep them together.



Keys to good composting

1. The carbon/nitrogen ratio

A mixture of dry leaves, sawdust, or other sources of carbon combined with manure, green plants, or fertilizer for nitrogen (approximately 4:1 by volume).

2. The presence of microorganisms

A few shovels full of rich garden soil or compost will supply these.

3. The moisture level

The pile should have the moisture of a well-squeezed sponge. Add water as needed.

4. The oxygen level

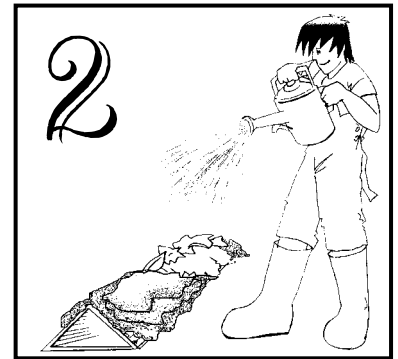
A compost pile should be turned periodically to promote decay of its contents. Turning the pile adds oxygen, so the more you turn it, the faster it breaks down.

5. The particle size

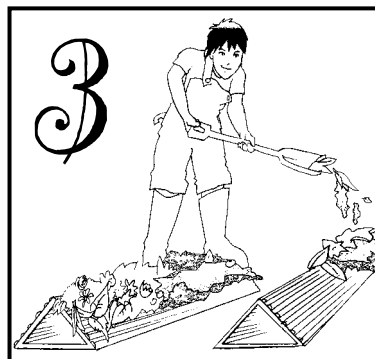
The finer the particle size, the more surface there is for microorganisms to work. Shredding leaves and larger materials generates compost faster.



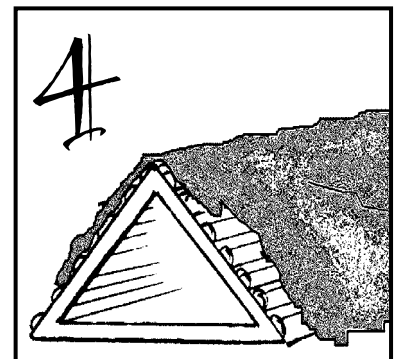
Place carbon and nitrogen materials on top of one of the triangle frames, leave the other one alone.



Each day, add more materials for composting and water the materials so that they stay damp.



Once the materials start to turn black (like soil), move them onto the other frame. Then, put more materials on the first frame again.



Keep the compost moisture level even by watering it regularly. It will take about 6 weeks for your compost to be ready, when it is all black.



Once your compost is ready, you can use it in your garden. Keep the compost making process going, so you always have stock.



The compost that you have made will help your garden, plants and soil to be more healthy and fertile.

**Using compost =
Healthy soil + Gardens**

Troubleshooting compost problems

The compost is only damp and warm in the middle of the pile

Probable cause

The compost pile is too small, or cold weather may have slowed down the composting process.

Suggested solution

If you are only composting in piles, make sure your pile is at least 1m high and 1m wide. With a composting cage or triangle composting system, the pile doesn't need to be as large.

Nothing is happening, the compost pile doesn't seem to be heating up at all

Probable cause

- Not enough nitrogen material.
- Not enough oxygen getting to compost.
- Not enough moisture in compost pile.
- The compost is done and ready to use.

Suggested solution

- Make sure you have enough nitrogen rich sources, like manure, grass clippings or food scraps.
- Mix up the pile so it can breathe, or switch to compost cage or triangle system.
- Mix up the pile and water it with the hose so that there is more moisture in the pile – a completely dry pile won't compost.

Leaves/clippings are not decomposing

Probable cause

Not enough aeration, and/or lack of moisture.

Suggested solution

- Avoid thick layers of only one type of material. Too much of one material, like leaves, paper or grass clippings, won't break down well.
- Break up the layers and mix up the pile so that there is a good mix of materials.
- Shred any large materials into small pieces to make sure they break down well.

The compost smells like rancid butter, vinegar or rotten eggs

Probable cause

Not enough oxygen, and/or the compost pile is too wet or compacted.

Suggested solution

- Mix up the pile so that it gets some aeration, or use a compost cage or triangle system.
- Add coarse dry materials like straw, hay or leaves to soak up excess moisture.
- If the smell is too bad, add dry materials on top and wait until it dries out before you mix the pile.

The compost smells like ammonia

Probable cause

Not enough carbon materials in the compost.

Suggested solution

Add more brown carbon materials, like sawdust, rice husks, leaves, straw, hay, shredded newspaper, etc.

The compost is attracting rodents, flies, or other animals

Probable cause

Inappropriate materials (meat, oil), or the food-like materials are too close to the surface or sides of the compost pile.

Suggested solution

Bury food scraps near the center of the pile. Don't add inappropriate materials (bones, meat) to your compost. Switch to a compost cage.

The compost is attracting insects, millipedes, and slugs

Probable cause

This is normal and part of the natural process.

The compost is attracting fire ants

Probable cause

The compost could be too dry, not hot enough, and/or has food scraps too close to the surface.

Suggested solution

Make sure your pile has a good mix of materials to heat up, and is kept moist enough.

