

REPURPOSE FOOD WASTE - How to Compost Food Waste

Brooke Greco, www.education.com, 2010 (<https://www.education.com/science-fair/article/composting-recycling-food-scrap/>)

Did you know that your food scraps can be composted? You can put your composted materials to good use!

What materials are required?

- Plastic bin
- Soil (part 1, 2 shovels worth needed; part 2, 1 1/2 planting pots worth needed)
- Saw dust (2 shovels worth)
- Leaves, grass clippings, weeds (2 shovels worth)
- Food scraps – vegetables, fruits, coffee grounds (2 shovels worth)
- Water
- Newspaper (2 shovels worth of shredded paper)
- 3 Planting pots
- Lettuce seeds (handful)



Part 1: Create your own compost

1. Set up your composting bin (a large plastic storage bin or a plastic garbage bin will work)
2. Place bin in an accessible outdoor area with plenty of space around it. The locations should have a water source nearby.
3. Put old plant leaves, grass clippings/weeds, fruit/vegetable food scraps, coffee grounds, etc. into the bin.
4. Sprinkle the mix with water. The mix should be moist, but not overflowing with water.
5. Add shredded newspaper and sawdust.
6. Sprinkle the mix with water.
7. Add soil.
8. Sprinkle the mix with water.
9. If desired, you may add earthworms to the compost after one week. This will speed up the composting process but is not necessary.
10. Sprinkle water on the compost mix every week and stir if desired (stirring not necessary).
11. After 4-6 weeks, your mix should be a dark compost mix (it should look like soil).

Part 2: Test compost effect on plants

1. Fill one plant pot with compost (leave one inch of space from the top of the pot).
2. Label this pot 'Compost Only'.
3. Plant 5 -10 seeds in this pot.
4. Fill second plant pot with a mixture of ½ soil and ½ compost (leave one inch of space from the top of the pot).
5. Label this pot "Compost and Soil Mix".
6. Plant 5-10 seeds in this pot.
7. Fill the third plant pot with soil (leave one inch of space from the top of the pot).
8. Label this pot "Soil Only"
9. Plant 5-10 seeds in this pot.
10. Water all pots evenly and set in an area of partial to no sunlight.
11. Monitor lettuce growth over several weeks and record any differences in physical characteristics of the plants (color, size, etc.).

When lettuce is full grown, pick and enjoy!