Composting: Myth Vs. Fact

MYTH: Compost creates odors and attracts pests.

FACT: Properly building and maintaining compost using organic waste almost never attracts pests and will smell like a humus-rich forest.

MYTH: Compost is unsightly.

FACT: Attractive, low-cost compost enclosures can be built or purchased.

MYTH: Composting requires a lot of work.

FACT: Compost is a natural process. Basically, the elements of nature do the work. You can turn the material once a week or once a month. Compost just happens!

5 Reasons to Start Backyard Composting

REduces food waste and yard debris waste
Creates a valuable soil amendment
Prevents greenhouse gases
Ideal for households with a yard
Easy to do

Find more tips and resources at longbeach.gov/lbrecycles

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www.longbeach.gov/lbrecycles

Join other LB Recyclers in shaping and sharing environmental knowledge and behaviors.

Find resources and workshops on recycling and waste reduction on our website.

Join the conversation

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Getting Started With Backyard Composting

Transform Food Scraps and Yard Debris in the City of Long Beach

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Ensure a Healthy Compost in 3 Steps

1. Choose your bin
   You can build your own bin or buy pre-made discounted bins through the City:
   - Soil Saver
   - Presto GeoBin

   Purchase bin here:

2. Set up the bin
   - Place in a shady, dry area.
   - Avoid places with low levels where water can accumulate after rain.

3. Start composting!
   Collect food scraps and yard debris and arrange the materials in your bin. See the center panel (right) for approved materials.

   Do NOT compost:
   - Meat scraps and bones
   - Dairy
   - Processed foods
   - Fats, oils, and grease
   - Plastic
   - Diseased vegetation
   - Citrus
   - Palm fronds and large wood pieces
   - Pet waste and cat litter
   - Treated wood (or ashes from treated wood)
   - “Compostable” plastics

   Layered materials:
   - 3 parts “Brown”
   - 1 part “Green”

   Cover
   - Aeration vents

   Compost collection door

What to compost

“Browns” or Carbons
- Dry leaves
- Wood chips/sawdust
- Straw/hay
- Shredded paper
- Small twigs
- Tree bark
- Nutshells
- Eggshells

“Greens” or Nitrogens
- Grass and plant trimmings
- Fruit and vegetable scraps
- Flowers
- Fresh leaves
- Coffee grounds and filters
- Loose leaf tea & tea bags (natural fiber, staples removed)

Proper Moisture Level
- Browns
- Greens
- Water
- Air

Turn Your Compost once a week or more. Compost needs to breathe.

Include Key Components

Timeline for Compost

If turned, finished compost takes 6-8 weeks. If not turned, finished compost takes 6-8 months.

Finished compost will be dark, crumbly topsoil and has an earthy smell.

How to Use Finished Compost

Top-dress your lawn
- Sprinkle compost lightly over your lawn to improve the lawn’s health. Water well.

Potting mix for new plants
- 2 parts strained compost, 1 part sand or perlite.

Soil amendment for already planted plants
- Combine a small amount of compost to cover 1-2 inches of soil.

For a soil/garden bed before planting
- Mix 3-4 inches into the soil before planting and you are ready for plants.

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