

# Composting at home

## Quick Start Guide

### Step 1: Choose a location

When picking a spot for your home compost pile, make sure it is:

- Easy to access year-round
- Free of standing water

### Step 2: Stock up on browns

Browns are dry plant materials. To compost year-round, you will need to gather a volume of browns roughly the size of your bin or the pile you would like your compost pile to be.

### Step 3: Layer greens with those browns

It's time to start composting. As you have food scraps and fresh yard waste, add them to your pile and cover them with browns. Layers should be 4 inches deep or less. The general guideline is 3 parts brown for every 1 part green.

### Containing your compost

You can buy or build a compost bin, as long as it has an open bottom. Or, don't contain it at all! Loose composting piles also work.



### Browns

- Dry leaves
- Wood chips
- Shredded paper
- Paper towels and toilet paper tubes
- Straw or hay
- Cardboard
- Paper bags
- Sawdust

### Troubleshooting

#### Too smelly?

• Not enough air, or too much green. Mix pile and/or add brown material.

#### Too Slow?

• Not enough water. Moisten and mix pile.

#### Damp and warm only in the center?

• Pile is too small. Collect more materials to mix in the pile

#### Pile is damp and sweet smelling, but not hot

• Not enough greens. Mix in more green materials, including grass clippings or weeds.

#### Fruit flies everywhere

• Too much green. Mix the pile and add more brown material to the top.

#### Need more help/advice?

Contact us at [solid.waste@lenawee.mi.us](mailto:solid.waste@lenawee.mi.us) or call 517-264-4511.

### Greens

- Fruit and vegetable scraps
- Coffee Grounds
- Tea bags (with no plastic)
- Eggshells
- Plant scraps
- Grass clippings
- Flowers



### Do not use

- Whole branches or logs
- Pet or human waste
- Charcoal briquette ash
- Sawdust from treated wood
- Meat or Dairy