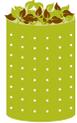


COMPOST HAPPENS...

Composting is a natural process that can help you save money and helps protect the environment. It takes a little effort to get started, but it is well worth the time. Composting is something that you can do in your own backyard with little difficulty as long as you follow these simple guidelines:



Pick-up a compost bin at no additional charge from the Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services. Please visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling or call **240-777-6410** for locations and details.



Place a mixture of leaves and grass clippings into your compost bin. If you add only leaves, it will take a longer time to make compost. A three-to-one mix of carbon to nitrogen materials (see list) works the best. Adding only grass clippings may result in a strong odor when the grass decomposes, so make sure to add some carbon-rich materials such as leaves when you add grass clippings.



Keep your compost pile moist throughout the year, especially when first adding materials. The compost pile should not be completely soaked, but should feel more like a damp sponge. A dry pile will not compost, so leave a concave depression at the top of the pile to capture rainwater. If the pile gets too wet, add some brown materials such as leaves.



Turn your pile occasionally to aerate it, whether every week, every month, or just once or twice a year. Doing so will add oxygen to your pile and will help speed the composting process.

COMPOSTING WORKS

Composting is an effective and natural way to turn yard trimmings such as grass clippings and leaves into a beneficial soil conditioner for your lawn and garden. Using compost on your lawn and in your garden replenishes essential nutrients in the soil without using commercial fertilizers that can be potentially harmful to the environment.

✓ COMPOSTING DOs

Carbon-Rich (Brown) Materials

- ✓ Dry leaves
- ✓ Cotton rags
- ✓ Dryer and vacuum lint
- ✓ Sawdust
- ✓ Straw
- ✓ Wood chips

Nitrogen-Rich (Green) Materials

- ✓ Plant trimmings
- ✓ Flowers
- ✓ Grass clippings
- ✓ Fresh hay
- ✓ Nut shells

⊘ COMPOSTING DON'Ts

- ⊘ Black walnut tree leaves or twigs
- ⊘ Coal or charcoal ash
- ⊘ Diseased or insect-ridden plants
- ⊘ Food wastes* (dairy products, fats, grease, lard, oils, meats, fish, bones and vegetable scraps)
- ⊘ Pet wastes

*Please note: Adding food scraps to a compost bin is strongly discouraged as it can attract pests such as insects and rodents.



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Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services

Phone: 240.777.6410 • Fax: 240.777.6465 • TTY: 240.777.6442

E-mail: recycle@montgomerycountymd.gov • www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling



DID YOU KNOW?

Compost made from yard trim materials such as leaves and grass clippings in your own backyard can be used to improve the soils in your lawn and garden. And, it reduces the need for commercial fertilizer products that can be harmful to the environment.



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