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# GUIDE TO COMPOST MAKING

## PEOPLE, RULES, AND ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING THE PROTECTION OF ECOSYSTEM RESOURCES (PROSPER) PROJECT

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# COMPOST MAKING

This pamphlet will show you how to make compost in a few easy steps. Compost is made by adding layers of different organic materials. As it rots, the layers of material become compost.

There are many different ways to make compost.

We will show you two ways to make compost

- **Making compost in a pit**
- **Making compost in a heap**

## Why use compost?

- Compost is a free organic fertilizer.
- It improves soil structure and helps soil to hold water.
- It provides nutrients to the plants.
- **Compost increases yields.**

## What can we use to make compost?

- **DRY PLANT MATERIAL** gives the soil carbon and improves soil structure.
- **WATER** will help the heap to rot.
- **ANIMAL DROPPINGS** from e.g. cows, chickens, goats, or pigs (fresh or dried) add nutrients are excellent for making good compost.
- **TOP SOIL** will provide for insects and worms.
- **GREEN PLANT MATERIAL** adds nutrients.
- **ASH** adds plant nutrients and helps the heap to rot.

## Making compost in a PIT

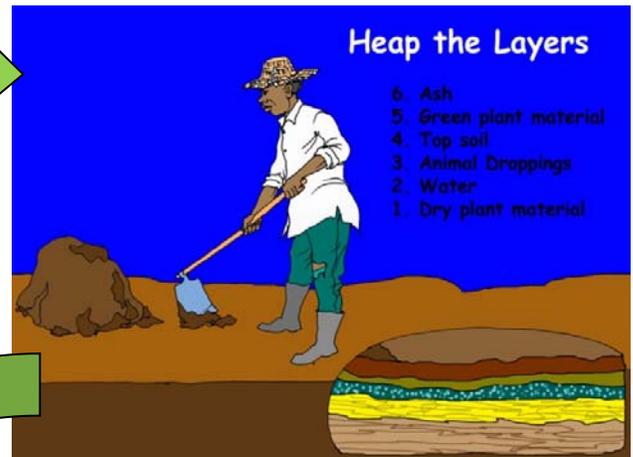
### Step 1

- Find an area with shade.
- Dig a pit for the compost.
- Make a bed with twigs or stalks.
- Make the size of the pit 3 ft by 4ft.



### Step 2

- Stack the layers in order shown.
- Repeat the layers 1-6 two or three times.
- Cover with soil and dry grass.



### Step 3

- After 3 weeks turn the pit into another shallow pit. This helps the compost to rot.
- Turn again after another three weeks (back into the first pit).



## Making compost in a PIT (continued)

### Step 4

- After another 3 weeks the pit will be brown and lumpy. This means the compost is ready.
- Dig a small trench around the plant, apply some compost and cover with soil.



## Making compost in a HEAP

- Layout the area; 1 meter wide and 1 meter long (3.3 feet x 3.3 feet)
- Enclose the area with raw sticks standing closely together; you can use palm fond to weave in between the sticks
- Loosen the soil within the fenced area in order to activate micro-organism activities.
- Pile layers of compost material such as **dry plant material, animal droppings, dark top soil, green plant material** and **ash** (up to 5 feet high).
- The order of the layers should be as follows:
  - **First Layer:** Dry grass
  - **Second layer:** Green plant materials (chopped)

- **Third layer:** A thin layer of black or clay type soil
- **Fourth layer:** Animal manure (chicken, goat, cow) and dark top soil.
- **Fifth layer:** Ashes (from your cooking kitchen)



When all done sprinkle water over the compost heap.

- o Repeat the layers until the heap is about 5 feet high.
- o Insert a stick in the center of the heap for regular checking of the composting process. When the process is good, the stick, when pulled out, should feel warm.
- o Keep the heap moist but not saturated or soaked with water.
- o Make sure to avoid that the compost materials dry out.
- o The compost from the heap should be ready for use as fertilizer between 3-4 months.



Dry grass

Ashes

Water

Green plant materials

- Fifth layer:** Ashes from your cooking kitchen ->
- Fourth layer:** Animal manure ->
- Third layer:** Black or clay type soil ->
- Second layer:** Green plant materials (chopped) ->
- 1<sup>st</sup> Layer:** Dry grass ->

