

COMPOSTING AT HOME

Composting your food and garden scraps is one of the easiest ways to reduce your greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as well as feed your garden.

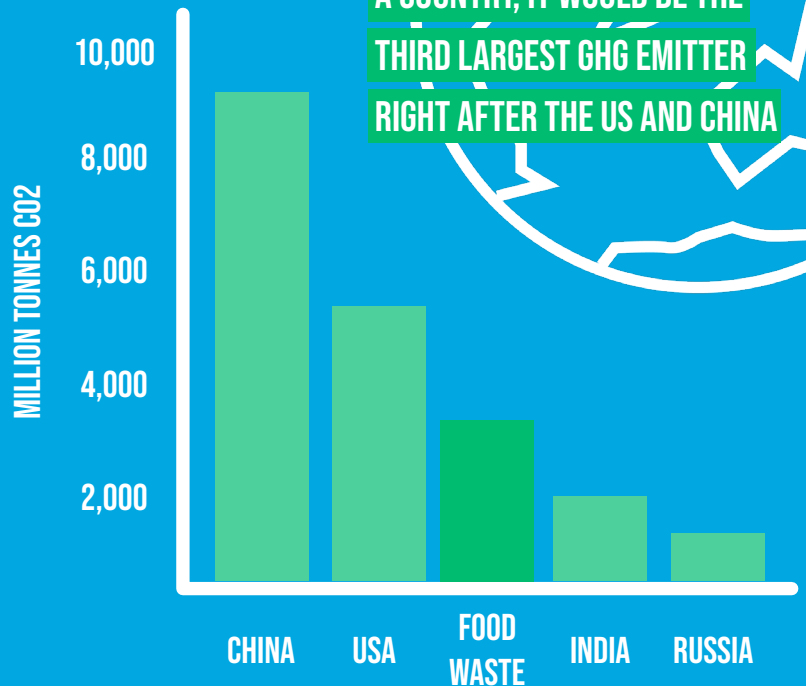
WHY?

When organic waste like food goes to landfill, it decomposes and creates methane, a greenhouse gas 25 times more potent than CO₂!

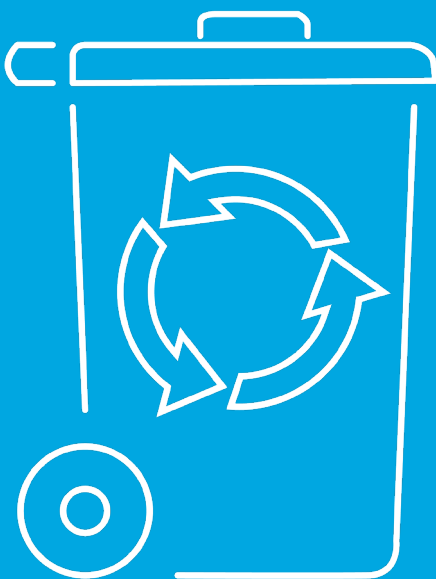
The use of compost in gardening can:

- Reduce the amount of water required
- Reduce the amount of synthetic fertilisers needed
- Improve the structure, fertility and health of soils
- Help regenerate soils suffering from poor management

GLOBALLY, IF FOOD WASTE WAS A COUNTRY, IT WOULD BE THE THIRD LARGEST GHG EMITTER RIGHT AFTER THE US AND CHINA



HOW?



SETTING UP

1. Use a small container or bin that is easy to carry and clean to collect food scraps in your kitchen.
2. Purchase a compost bin that's right for you. If you have enough space, have a 'working bin' to add to every day, and another 'digesting bin' that you leave to break down once full. You can claim up to 80% off RRP with some local council subsidies at [Compost Revolution](#).
3. Place your compost bin where it will get a lot of sun. The heat will help to speed up the process. Just remember to air it regularly.
4. Ensure your compost bin is at least 30 cm from walls, fences or any structure to avoid rodents.
5. Start adding organics, ensuring that over time you have a mix of green and brown scraps (see below).
6. Check with your local council or community gardens to see if they run composting workshops if you need more help getting started.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED...

1. A GOOD BALANCE OF

GREEN SCRAPS (NITROGEN)	BROWN SCRAPS (CARBON)
Fruit and veggie scraps including chilli	Dry leaves
Citrus & onions	Shredded paper & cardboard
Garlic	Straw
Grains	Paper towels (free of cleaner leftovers)
Tea & coffee	Napkins
Flowers	Wood chips/saw dust
Small quantities of bread, rice & pasta only	Dry grass

2. OXYGEN



Make sure you turn your compost regularly, at least once a month.

Sprinkle water when necessary to ensure your compost is moist, but not too wet

3. MOISTURE



HARVESTING

Your compost is ready to use when it looks like soil and has an earthy smell. If you find any materials that haven't broken down after you harvest it, simply put them back in your bin.

COMPOST BIN

Remove the compost from the bottom, new materials thrown on the top might not be ready yet. Most bins have a little door at the bottom to make this easy for you.

If you have a long-term, 'digesting' bin, lift the whole bin, the whole batch will likely be ready.

COMPOST TUMBLER

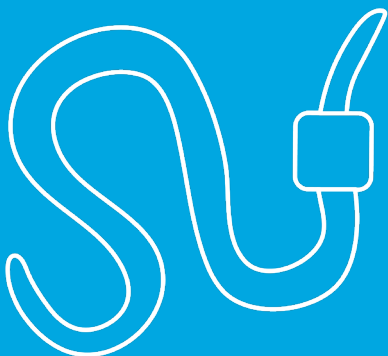
If your tumbler has 2 compartments, fill one up first and let it mature while you start filling the other half. If it has only one compartment and it is full, you'll have to wait (check frequently and air it) until the whole batch is ready (between 4-12 weeks).

Empty the compost in a bucket and start over. You can leave a little bit in the tumbler to kick start your new compost.

TROUBLE SHOOTING

WORMS

Compost worms will naturally appear, they are amazing and will increase the quality of your compost, let them be.



PRO TIPS!

- The most common problem is not having access in your garden to enough dry leaves. Why not get them from the street? There is a surplus of dry leaves on our walkways so don't be shy and collect them when you can.
- If you need more nitrogen for your compost, register with [ShareWaste](#) and accept food scraps from neighbours.

MATERIAL NOT BREAKING DOWN

It could be too dry, too cold or doesn't have enough oxygen. Turn your compost more frequently, add some water and if possible more green and brown scraps to increase its mass and generate more heat.

ANTS & COCKROACHES

The compost might be too dry. Add water and stir.

FLIES

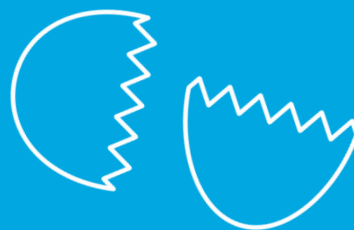
The flies around compost bins are usually fruit flies. It is normal to have them and they will go away once your compost is ready. If you have house or brown flies, it is likely they are attracted to meat or dairy products. Add soil to your compost and keep meat and dairy out of the compost bin.

SOLDIER FLY LARVAE

Often mistaken for maggots, they are bigger and brown, don't remove them! Any respectable composter will know they will get the job done faster for you. They will eventually leave.

BAD SMELL

It might be missing oxygen or brown scraps. Add dry leaves and give it a good stir.



RODENTS

Rodents are attracted to smelly or uncovered food. Stir your compost regularly to avoid rodent nesting. Place a wire mesh below your compost so that they cannot get in through the soil and ensure the lid is properly closed. A tumbler is less likely to get rodents.

TOO DRY

Spray some water but avoid over-watering. Add green scraps, particularly fruit scraps.

TOO WET

For excessive moisture, add dry brown scraps. Check that it has good drainage.



MORE INFORMATION

Visit [Recycling Near You](#)