



SUSTAINABILITY

*Learn to live
lightly by
focussing on
Sustainability
and knowing
more about your
place*

Activity overview

Make an easy
compost bin
with what you
already have at
home

Equipment required

Recycled
box/bin
Recycled
material to
cover
Garden fork or
shovel

Time required

A few minutes
every day

CARDBOARD BOX COMPOST

In Australia, up to half of our household garbage is made up of food waste and garden vegetation. When these break down in landfill they are often buried, which means they break down anaerobically (without air) and produce methane as a by-product. Methane has 25 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide! By diverting your garden and food scraps to a simple home compost system, you are helping the Earth and taking steps towards living lightly.

Step 1: Find some recycled materials to make your bin out of. An old cardboard box, a milk crate, an old bin or chicken wire are some ideas.

Step 2: Place it in a shaded spot in your garden (away from dogs would be a good idea)

Step 3: Alternate layers of brown and green materials beginning with a layer of brown materials

- **Brown materials :** leaves, small sticks, brown paper bags, newspaper, dry lawn clippings, soil
- **Green materials:** food waste

Step 4: Keep compost moist but not saturated by adding water occasionally

Step 5: Cover with old piece of carpet or heavy material (cardboard, damp newspaper, old towel) so it doesn't dry out too much

Step 6: Every couple of weeks use a garden fork or shovel to mix materials - **don't forget to add water!**

Handy hints:

- If your compost gets a bit stinky, it usually means that it is too moist or doesn't have enough air. Don't worry, it's easy to fix – add more brown materials (you will need A LOT of them), and mix it more regularly.
- Bugs are good! The presence of lots of insects and worms is normal, and they actually help to break your compost down quicker.
- It can take 3-4 months for your compost to break down properly. Be patient!
- When your compost turns brown and crumbly it is ready to add to your garden.

Sources : <https://www.compostweek.com.au/about-composting/>
<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/get-composting/9437492>

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