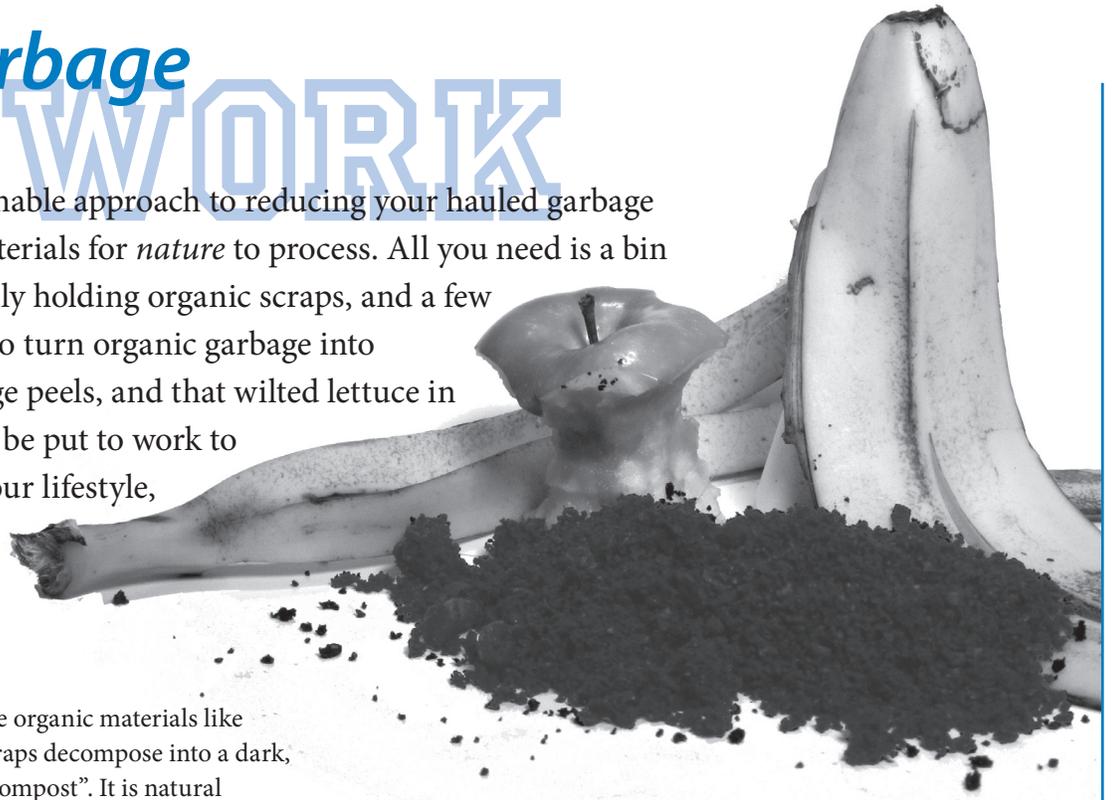


Put Your Garbage

TO WORK

Home composting is a sustainable approach to reducing your hauled garbage by separating out organic materials for *nature* to process. All you need is a bin in your kitchen for temporarily holding organic scraps, and a few square feet of outdoor space to turn organic garbage into *compost*. Coffee grinds, orange peels, and that wilted lettuce in the back of the fridge, can all be put to work to make next year's yard, and your lifestyle, a little greener.



What is Composting?

Composting is a natural process where organic materials like grass clippings, leaves, and kitchen scraps decompose into a dark, crumbly, soil conditioner known as "compost". It is natural recycling that contributes to healthy plant growth by providing plants with nutrients.

Why Should I Compost?

Home composting allows you to manage kitchen and yard waste on your own property by turning it into a useful end product.

Saves money

- Reduces food waste
- Reduces fertilizer & water use
- Reduces the volume of garbage going to landfills, transfer stations and incinerators

Benefits your soil and plants

- Promotes soil structure and fertility, stimulates healthy root development
- Increases aeration and water retention
- Aids in erosion control

How Do I Compost?

First choose a spot outdoors that receives sun and shade. Next choose what to compost in. Compost can be made in open piles, fenced in areas, or a compost bin (the neatest option). Start by putting leaves, grass clippings, and your organic household waste into your compost bin with some soil. If you regularly aerate the pile by turning it over, the process will happen more quickly. If you want to leave it alone and let "nature take its course" decomposition will eventually happen without you lifting a finger. There are loads of "recipes" and resources online to help get you started.

Do compost

- Vegetable & fruit food scraps
- Egg, peanut, & nut shells
- Grass clippings & leaves
- Flowers & weeds
- Sawdust & wood ash
- Chopped twigs & branches
- Coffee grounds w/filters

Don't compost

- Meat scraps, fat, or bones
- Fish or dairy products
- Diseased or insect infested plants
- Weeds with seeds
- Dog & cat feces
- Grease or soap

Uses for Compost

Mulch Spread compost around flower and vegetable plantings, trees, shrubs, and on exposed slopes. This will smother weeds, keep plant roots moist, and prevent soil erosion.

Soil Conditioner Mix 1-3 inches of compost into vegetable and flower beds before planting. This returns organic matter to the soil in a usable form.

Potting Mix Make your own mix by using equal parts of compost and sand or soil. Make sure compost is fully decomposed and screened.

Compost Tea Compost tea is made by steeping compost in water. It can be used as a nutrient boost for plants indoors and out by spraying directly on leaves or drenching their soil.

For More Information

Learn more about composting from the links below. Compost bins can be purchased online and at yard & garden or hardware stores.

Reach us at environmentalcommission@hotmail.com.

<http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/>

<http://www.compostjunkie.com>

<http://www.recyclingnj.com/recycle/garden/composting.html>

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