



Winter Backyard Composting Tips



It may be winter, but you can still do backyard composting! Cooler temperatures slow down the biological processes that break down organic waste, but you can still successfully compost your food scraps and yard trimmings.

Try the following tips to make quality compost and get a headstart on spring!

Add a Good Mix of Green and Brown: Materials should ideally be layered in equal amounts by volume. Green materials like food scraps are typically rich in nitrogen. Brown materials are higher in carbon and include yard waste such as fallen leaves and plant debris. Establishing the right carbon-to-nitrogen (C:N) ratio provides optimal conditions for decomposition, insulates your bin and controls odours.

Choose an Accessible Location: Minimize trips out to your bin during cold and rainy days!

Place Your Bin in a Sunny Spot: This allows it to absorb heat and speed up decomposition.

Insulate Your Bin: You can use cardboard, straw bales, leaves or even snow. Keeping compost in the warmest conditions possible will help increase the rate of decomposition.

Add Lots of Fuel: Most compost piles don't get hot because they are too small to retain heat; they still often produce quality compost but it takes longer. A cubic meter is a minimum volume for "hot composting." Consider outsourcing waste materials - food scraps from friends, coffee grinds from cafes, or waste produce from grocers to boost your pile volume.

Two is Better Than One: One bin is usually sufficient for a small family and overflow is unlikely even during winter. But if you need more space, having an extra bin can give you an advantage. Use one bin to contain finished compost (ready to use in the garden) and one to collect new materials.

Don't have a backyard? Check out our Balcony and Indoor Composting Tip Sheet!



Need more tips on winter composting?
Visit www.rcbc.ca or call the Recycling Hotline
Lower Mainland: 604-732-9253 Toll-Free: 1-800-667-4321

