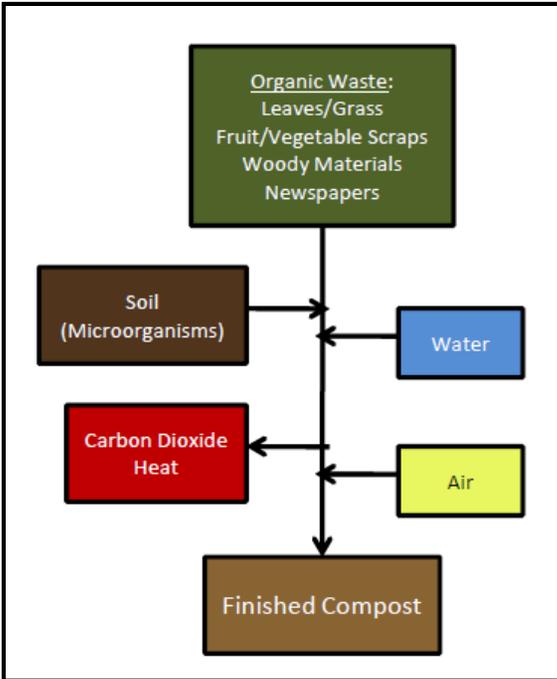


WHAT IS COMPOSTING?

Nature knows how to recycle! Composting helps turn things like dead leaves, vegetable peelings, and grass clippings into food and soil for new plants to grow.



Compost is not ordinary soil, it is stocked with nutrients to feed plants and help them grow. It makes a great amendment to the garden!

Much of what we throw away can either be recycled or composted, so composting also reduces the amount of trash in our landfills.

Home composting serves as a useful educational tool—teaching children about conservation and the “cycle of life.”

Start your compost pile today!

Buy A Compost Bin

To help you get started composting, consider buying a bin. The Town of Apex sells compost bins to interested residents for \$50.00. The bins are available for purchase (cash or check) at the Public Works facility at 105 Upchurch St.



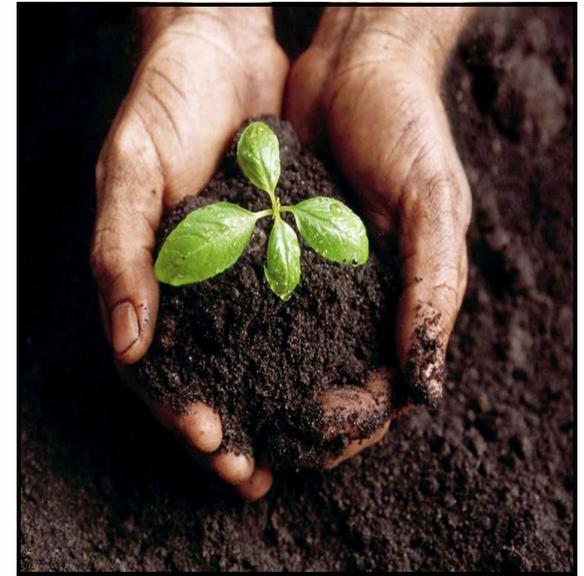
Apex appreciates your interest in this program!



249-3427

WWW.APEXNC.ORG

Town of Apex



COMPOSTING

Public Works & Utilities Department
Environmental Programs Division
105 Upchurch Street
Apex, NC 27502
(919) 249-3427

How to Compost

The first step in learning how to compost is understanding your ingredients as “**green**” or “**brown**”.

Green ingredients supply your pile with nitrogen.

These include kitchen scraps, fresh lawn clippings, weeds pulled from your garden, etc. Every pile needs the green ingredients, but too much can lead to a rotting pile instead of a compost pile.

Brown ingredients supply your pile with carbon.

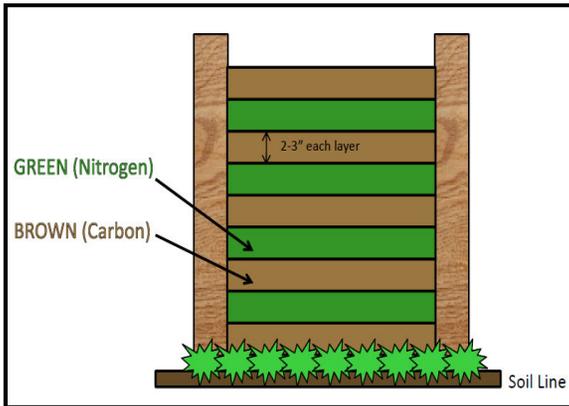
These items are often drier and include dead leaves, branches, hedge trimmings, straw, etc. Each pile needs some brown ingredients, but too much can cause the pile to be very slow to heat up and break down.

An optimal balance to strive for in your pile:

25% Green Organic Materials

75% Brown Organic Materials

Ideally, the compost pile should be layered with **greens** and **browns** with each level 2-3” deep.



The key to composting is a combination of water, heat, oxygen, and biodegradable materials that are layered, watered (to be the consistency of a wet sponge), and turned frequently.

COMPOSTING MATERIALS

Suggested Greens:

- Fresh grass clippings
- Dead weeds
- Flowers
- Vegetable peelings
- Fruit cores
- Egg shells
- Coffee grounds

Suggested Browns:

- Dead, dry leaves (chopped well)
- Brush
- Twigs/small branches
- Straw/hay
- Other woody residuals
- Newspaper
- Coffee filters/tea bags
- Paper plates/napkins

Improper Composting Items:

- Meats/bones
- Grease/oil
- Dairy products
- Human and pet waste
- Diseased plants
- Chemically-treated wood
- Rocks
- Plastics
- Styrofoam

“When in doubt, keep it out.”

Helpful Tips

- Keep moisture content of compost pile at 40-60% (moist, but not soggy).
- A mixture of soft and rough material will facilitate natural aeration of the pile.
- Shred brown ingredients before adding to pile to increase surface area and speed decomposition
- Bury food items in 8-12” of compost to limit odors.
- Turn pile often to introduce oxygen, which will help compost break down quicker.
- For faster composting, keep the pile in the sun.



TROUBLESHOOTING

If your compost pile is:

Too wet—Turn, add dry materials, cover.

Too dry—Turn, add water, mix thoroughly.

Too warm—Turn, add green material.

Not heating up—Add water, make pile bigger, add green material, chop or grind material before adding.

Emitting strong odors—Turn, add brown material, add water less often.

Attracting wildlife—Bury food materials, leave out meat/bones/dairy/grease, make sure bin is securely fastened and/or locked.