

Victorians throw away enough food waste to fill the MCG approximately five times every year!

Over half the waste you put into your garbage bin is green waste and food scraps.



So if you've been meaning to get composting, now is a great time to get started!



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Start composting at home.



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Composting has many benefits—it improves garden soil without using artificial fertilizers, helps retain water in the soil, reduces greenhouse gas methane (which is produced by rotting rubbish in tips), saves landfill space, reduces the cost of rubbish disposal to the community and it is nature's own way of recycling!

Compost Favourites.

- Flowers • Leaves
- Prunings • Vegetable oil
- Egg shells • Vacuum dust
- Fruit & vegetable peelings
- Newspaper • Tea bags
- Coffee grounds
- Wood ash

Compost Dislikes.

- Meat & dairy products
- Bones • Large branches
- Diseased plants
- Magazines • Weeds
- Pet droppings

Composting methods.

There are two methods of composting **aerobic and anaerobic**. Anaerobic means that decomposition occurs without oxygen. This process is slow and can give off unpleasant odours, and more importantly, methane, which is a powerful greenhouse gas. In Aerobic decomposition, the breakdown is caused by the actions of micro-organisms that thrive in oxygen. It is quite rapid and can cause the heap to become quite hot and does not usually produce unpleasant odours.

Getting started.

- 1. Choose a shady spot in the garden for your compost bin, enclosure or heap.** Too much sun will dry out your compost.
- 2. Put your compost in layers of food scraps, garden clippings and paper** - Just like a lasagna! This helps build up the heat and speed up the process.
- 3. Keep your compost slightly moist and mix it once a month or more.** After 3-4 months or so, when the compost is dark and crumbly, it will be ready to use. Dig it into your garden beds or spread it on top as mulch.

Successful composting.

Food

Compost needs two types of food—browns (dry materials like straw, autumn leaves, ash, wood chips, newspapers or saw dust) and greens (fresh plant material like lawn clippings, food scraps, green leaves and blood and bone).

Air

The micro organisms that are doing all the work in your compost to break it down, need air to work effectively. To ensure that your compost is getting enough air it is recommended that you turn your compost regularly. Punching holes in the container or inserting a slotted agricultural pipe into the heap can also help air move through.

Water

Ideally, your compost should be as moist as a wrung-out sponge. If it is drier than this, composting will be slowed down significantly. If it is wetter, the ingredients will be so heavy they will exclude air from the pile, slowing the process and creating bad smells.

