



*Local solutions.
Planet healthy.*

Why is composting so simple?

Composting is the decomposition of plant remains and other once-living materials to make an earthy, dark, crumbly substance that is excellent for adding to houseplants or enriching garden soil. It is the way to recycle your yard and kitchen wastes, and is a critical step in reducing the volume of garbage needlessly sent to landfills for disposal. It's easy to learn how to compost, but thinking of composting in terms of pre-consumer waste makes the idea and implementation of composting practices so much simpler.

Often, when we think of composting in our homes or our establishments, we think of creating complex systems where food scraps from plates can be carefully dismantled into separate containers and lugged out like smelly swill. While that is important over time, post-consumer composting of left-over food on plates is actually Step 2.



Step 1 is finding simple containers for composting for pre-consumer waste – those random scraps of non-edibles that occur during the cooking process before food is cooked and reaches the plate – is the first and simplest way to begin the composting process.

Fruit and vegetable peels/rinds, tea bags, coffee grounds, eggshells, and similar materials are great pre-consumer matter to begin composting. They tend to be high in nitrogen (this puts them in the 'greens' category), and are usually quite soft and moist. As such, kitchen wastes need to be mixed in with drier/bulkier materials such as lawn clippings, leaves or weeds, woodchips, or sawdust to allow complete air penetration once those scraps are moved outdoors. Avoid composting meat scraps, fatty food wastes, milk products, and bones -- these materials are very attractive to pests.

But why compost in the first place? Composted kitchen waste are organic materials that have been diverted from landfills which ultimately avoids the production of methane and leachate formulation in the landfills. Compost has the ability to prevent pollutants in stormwater runoff from reaching surface water resources. Compost has also been shown to prevent erosion and silting on embankments parallel to creeks, lakes, and rivers, and prevents erosion and turf loss on roadsides, hillsides, playing fields, and golf courses. See what a fundamentally positive environmental impact your little carrot peelings can make? Wow!