



Composting at home

Steps, tips
and advice



The Government of Quebec has developed and implemented a series of concrete measures designed to reduce the amount of residual matter generated and to be disposed of. This new direction is centered on the environmental practices known as the 4 R's: reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover.

Because organic waste (table scraps, grass clippings, leaves, etc.) makes up nearly half of all municipal waste and is the main cause of pollution in sanitary landfills (leachate, greenhouse gases), composting is one of the best source reduction measures. Composting makes it easy to be green—every action counts!

Composting is a natural decomposition process that transforms organic residue into a stable product known as compost. Dark brown and rich in humus, compost looks and smells like potting soil.

Reducing the amount of
waste you put at the curb
is easy and ecological!



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Composting at home

How to be a model green citizen

Where and when can I compost?

You can start composting at any time of the year, except in the middle of winter. Place the composter in a place in the sun or half-shade to speed up decomposition. The pile must be placed on well-drained soil.

How do I compost?

The easiest way to compost is to pile up garden and table scraps in 5- to 10-cm layers alternating dry and wet materials. Next, allow the pile to compost for a few months, turning materials frequently (1 to 2 times per week).

Dry material	5 to 10 cm
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Wet material	5 to 10 cm
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Advice

To speed up the work of decomposing organisms, make sure the compost is moist but not overwatered, and aerate it using a garden fork or tool specially designed for this purpose. Break up the waste to speed up the decomposition of organic matter.

Uses

Composting significantly improves the physical, chemical, and biological properties of soil. It promotes the growth of plants and helps them develop a greater resistance against diseases and pests. Use it for your vegetable garden, flower beds and indoor plants.

The conversion of organic matter into high-quality compost depends on a multitude of living organisms that play an extremely important role in the composting process. They include **acarinas, actinomycetes, centipedes, ants, slugs, eelworms, earwigs, and earthworms.**



What should I compost?

Dry material

(Carbon-rich or "brown" materials)

- Shredded dead leaves, foliage, branches, twigs
- Sawdust, wood shavings
- Ashes of untreated wood
- Straw
- Tea bags, coffee grounds and filters
- Eggshells
- Hair, animal hair and fur, feathers
- Black and white newspaper, paper napkins



Wet material

(Nitrogen-rich or "green" plant materials)

- Fruit and vegetable scraps
- Grass clippings
- Weeds that have not gone to seed, roots
- Green foliage



Do not compost the following materials

(Some of these attract unwanted visitors)

- Weeds that have gone to seed
- Sick plants
- Meat scraps
- Excrement and animal litter
- Oil and grease
- Dairy products
- Bread
- Bones
- Fish scraps
- Nuts
- Cardboard, plastic and metal
- Ashes of treated wood



Every problem has a cause and a solution...

1

PROBLEM CAUSES

Foul odour

Not enough oxygen

Too much water or nitrogen-rich materials

SOLUTIONS

Turn the materials in the pile

Add dry materials such as dead leaves, sawdust, straw, soil or black and white newspaper

2

PROBLEM CAUSES

Dryness in the centre of the pile

Not enough moisture

SOLUTIONS

Turn the materials in the pile and moisten with water

3

PROBLEM CAUSES

Attraction of pests or animals

Poorly covered kitchen waste

SOLUTIONS

Always cover kitchen waste with soil, finished compost or dead leaves

Interested in getting your hands on a domestic composter?

Make sure your composter is well-aerated, has a good drainage system, and will allow you to easily turn the material.



In order to encourage this action of benefit to the environment, the City is offering a financing program to citizens who want to acquire a composter. For further information, please contact the Public Works Department by telephone at 514 630-1230 or by email at tp@ville.pointe-claire.qc.ca

Useful Web sites:

www.recyc-quebec.gouv.qc.ca (Recyc-Québec)

www.compost.org (Composting Council of Canada)

www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca

(Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs)