

# AN EASY GUIDE TO...

# COMPOST

TXK 411

There's no better way to fortify your garden while reducing your contribution to landfills than composting. Starting a compost pile can feel a little intimidating. Just remember to follow this simple equation...

**CARBON** + **NITROGEN** + **OXYGEN** + **WATER** + **TIME** = **COMPOST**



**CARBON/BROWNS/DRY**

- old topsoil
- twigs
- fall leaves
- sawdust
- cardboard
- cotton fabric
- paper



**NITROGEN/GREENS/WET**

- fruit peels, seeds, and cores
- vegetable peels and seeds
- green leaves
- grass clippings
- eggshells
- coffee and tea

**OXYGEN**

Use a pitchfork or shovel to turn the pile once a week or so, to aerate and help distribute moisture content. Gaps between the boards also help oxygen circulate.

**WATER**

Check every few days for moisture content. Water as needed to keep the pile damp, but not wet. The moisture content should be like a wrung-out dishrag. Add drainage holes in bottom in case you get too much rain. Too dry? Add greens. Too wet? Add browns.



**HARVEST**

The compost is ready to use after 2-3 months. You can add worms to speed up the process.

**COMPOST**

**BOX SIZE**

Aim for a box that is at least 3 feet by 3 feet by 3 feet. Start with a thick base layer of brown material, including sticks, twigs, wood chips, hay, or straw to promote air circulation. Then alternate layers of greens and browns, making sure to always have a layer of browns on top, to balance the moisture. Tight on space? A smaller compost pile can be successful with the addition of red wiggler worms. Fill a box a foot deep with layers of soil, newspaper, and leaves. Place the worms on top with a layer of fruit and vegetable waste. Be sure to make holes in the bottom of the box to allow for ventilation and drainage.



- Diseased plants
- Fats and oils
- Eggs, meat or fish bones and scraps
- Dairy products
- Produce stickers
- Pet waste
- Medication
- Cigarettes
- Broken glass