

Composting & Recycling

Composting is a system of breaking down the complex carbohydrates and proteins in dead organic material into simpler nutrients which can be used in plants.

Britain's households throw away millions of tonnes of rubbish each year. As much as 25% of all our household waste could be composted. This would help reduce the amount currently being buried in landfill sites, which adds to pollution by generating greenhouse gas.

Why Should I Compost?

- Helps reduce the amount of household waste produced locally and nationally.
- Improves the quality of the soil as it is an excellent soil conditioner.
- Saves money as there is no need to buy commercial compost.
- It helps preserve threatened peat bogs and endangered wildlife habitats because it can reduce Peat n Sage.



Do's

- Garden waste (ie. grass cuttings, hedge clippings, prunings, old plants & flowers)
- Kitchen waste (eg. fruit and vegetable peelings; tea bags/leaves, coffee grounds, egg shells)
- Sawdust, wood ash
- Crumpled or shredded cardboard
- Young weeds, autumn leaves (small amounts only – if not put them in black bin bags as they rot down and are great for mulch)
Woody prunings if shredded to a small size
- Pure wool jumpers
Bedding from vegetarian pets such as rabbits, hamsters and gerbils

Don'ts

- Cooked food, meat, fish and bread
- Dog/cat faeces or nappies
- Glass, plastic or metal (recycle separately)
- Paper with coloured ink—most paper is coated so will not decompose organically
- Plants infected with persistent diseases (i.e. clubroot, white rot, blackspot)
- Corks or coal ash
- Cuttings from grass treated with herbicides

Tips on Composting

Reactivate old, partially composted or dead heaps by breaking down and rebuilding or mixing in fresh grass or cuttings. Don't let the heap dry out, Add water in hot weather.

Use 2 bins side by side – fresher waste rots in one whilst ripe compost can be taken from another bin.

Dig into planting areas to improve soil structure, especially in clay based soils. It makes heavy soils easier to work and helps light soils to hold water.

Spread around shrubs and trees as a mulch.

Use in the spring and summer – spread on the surface and dig in to the top few inches of soil.

The more you put in at once and the hotter the weather, the quicker it composts.

A soggy, smelly heap needs more tough dry stuff

Leaf mould is particularly useful as a potting medium as well as mulch.

Community Composting

Community composting schemes can qualify for support through the Landfill Tax rebate scheme. Contact your local council to find out if there is a composting scheme operating in your area.



National Society of
Allotment & Leisure
Gardeners Limited

O'Dell House, Hunters Road, Corby, Northants NN17 5JE

T: 01536 266576 F: 01536 26450

E:natsoc@nsalg.org.uk W:www.nsalg.org.uk

PROTECT PROMOTE PRESERVE

© NSALG 2011