

## **What is Composting, and Why Should You Do It?**

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You may have heard of composting before, but what exactly is it? Composting breaks down organic matter, such as fruits and vegetables, coffee grounds, and table scraps into a nutrient-rich soil amendment. You can then use this soil to fertilize your garden or potted plants. Not only is composting great for the environment, but it can also save you money on expensive store-bought fertilizer. In this blog post, we'll discuss composting, how to start composting, and the benefits of composting.

## What is Composting?

As we mentioned, composting breaks down organic matter into a nutrient-rich soil amendment. Composting can be done either through aerobic (with oxygen) or anaerobic (without oxygen) decomposition.

The most common method of composting is aerobic decomposition, which happens when microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi, break down the organic matter in the presence of oxygen. This process usually takes place in a controlled environment, such as a commercial composting facility or a backyard bin.

Anaerobic decomposition, on the other hand, happens when microorganisms break down organic matter in the absence of oxygen. This process often occurs in landfills or wet environments like wetlands. While anaerobic decomposition does not produce the same nutrient-rich soil amendment as aerobic decomposition, it does prevent methane gas—a greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change—from being released into the atmosphere.

## How to Start Composting

If you're interested in starting to compost at home, there are a few different methods you can choose. If you have a backyard, you can build or buy a bin to store your compostable materials. Here on the Ecofarm, we have made several composting bins from recycled pallets. Once your compost bin is set up, you'll need to add a layer of carbon-rich materials (also known as "browns"), such as dead leaves or wood chips, followed by a layer of nitrogen-rich materials ("greens"), such as fruit and vegetable scraps. You'll then need to mix these materials and moisten them with water. Once your bin is full, it will take anywhere from two weeks to two months for the materials to break down into usable compost.

Many indoor composters are available on the market if you don't have a backyard (or don't want a smelly bin taking up space in your yard). These range from simple countertop bins to more sophisticated systems that use worms to speed up the decomposition process (vermicomposting). No matter which type of composter you choose, be sure to do your research to know what kind of maintenance it will require—you don't want your kitchen smelling like rotting garbage!

## Benefits of Composting

There are many benefits to composting, both for you and the environment. Here are just a few:

- Composting reduces methane emissions from landfills
- Compost enriches the soil and helps plants grow

- Compost can be used as a natural pest control

- Composting reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills

- Composting saves money by reducing the need for store-bought fertilizer, and with the current state of the world, the cost of fertilizer is rising.

As you can see, there are many good reasons to start composting at home. So what are you waiting for? Give it a try today!

We hope this blog post has convinced you to give composting a try! We will be posting more in-depth instructions in later posts for anyone ready to "dig in" and get started on their composting journey. It's easy to start, and there are many benefits for you and the environment. Do you have any tips for beginner composter? Let us know in the comments below!