

Making compost

Composting is a natural process but a little help speeds things up

Where to compost

- Easy access location
- Sunny or part-shaded
- On to soil, grass or concrete

Compost bins need...

- Wide opening for adding waste
- Lid to keep heat in and rain out
- Strength to hold contents

Getting the right mix

'Greens'

(*'activate' the process, but decay to a smelly mess on their own*)

Grass, soft green plant shoots

Green weeds (avoid seedheads)

Raw vegetable and fruit peelings

Comfrey and nettle leaves (very good activators)

Tea bags/leaves; coffee grounds

Horse, cattle, poultry manure

'Browns'

(*balance the process, but decay too slowly on their own*)

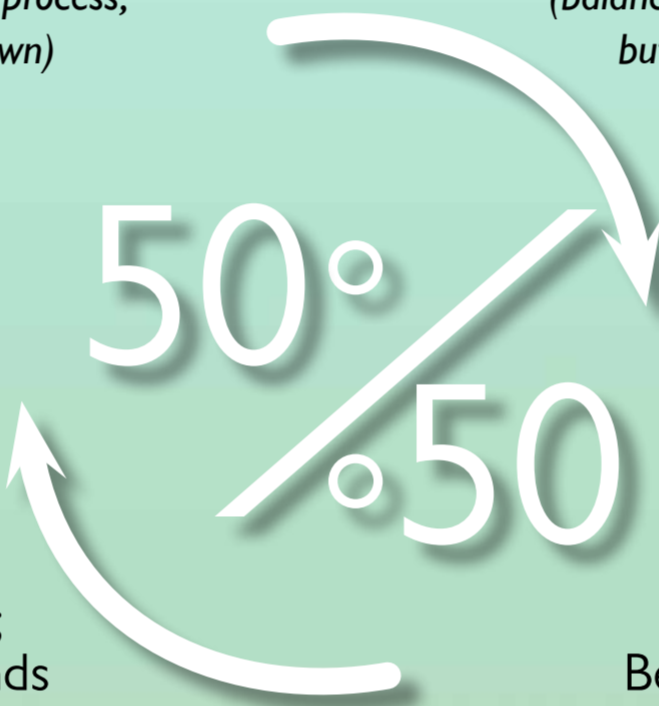
Woody plant shoots, tough hedge clippings (cut up)

Cardboard, eg cereal packets, egg boxes

Scrunched-up waste paper, magazines, newspaper (some, recycle rest)

Hay, straw, shredded paper, wood shavings

Bedding from herbivorous pets, eg guinea pigs



Add mix to cool or hot heap (or combination)

Cool heap

Ready in 12-18 months

Hot heap

Ready in 6-12 months

Bit by bit / All at once
ADDING MIX

Now and then / Again and again
TURNED OVER

Caution

- Compost perennial weed roots after 12 months in a plasticsack, eg for dandelion
- Diseased plant material

Do not compost

Meat, fish, cooked food, cat litter, dog faeces, coal and coke ash, disposable nappies, glass, plastic, metal

Illustrations: Verity Thompson

Further information

Garden Organic home composting www.homecomposting.org.uk

Community Composting Network www.communitycompost.org

'All about compost' by Pauline Pears and Charlotte Green

www.gardenorganic.org.uk/schools



 garden.
organic