

Backyard Composting

Compost Mound

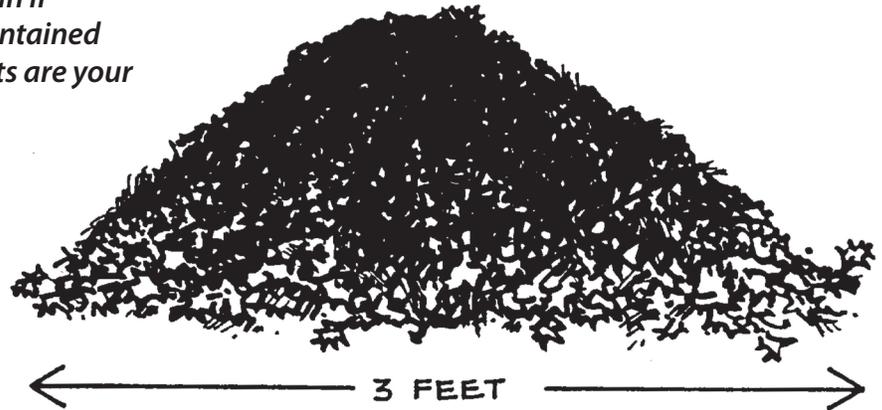


Yard wastes can be composted without a bin if you don't mind the appearance of an uncontained compost mound in your yard. The only costs are your time and effort.

What You Need

Tools

- shovel or pitchfork
- work gloves



Building a Compost Mound

Find a good location and pile your yard waste in a mound about 3 feet x 3 feet x 3 feet (1 meter x 1 meter x 1 meter). If you cover the pile with a layer of soil, it will keep in moisture for the microorganisms and soil animals working to make compost.

Adding Wastes

Add wastes as they become available. Nonwood materials such as grass clippings and garden wastes work best.

Maintaining Your Compost

It's best to have two piles. After the first pile is large enough, stop adding organic material and let it work. In the meantime, add your wastes to the second pile. Make sure the pile is moist, especially if it is not covered with soil.

You can turn the pile to speed composting. Compost should be ready in three to four months if a good compostable mixture of organic materials is used and the pile is turned regularly, or in about one year if you don't turn the pile.

Adapted from Cornell Cooperative Extension GPAE90712

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Wastes to Resources