

Backyard Composting

Garbage Can Composter



A garbage can composter is inexpensive and easy to build. It can be used for food or garden wastes. You do, however, need to turn the wastes.

What You Need

Materials

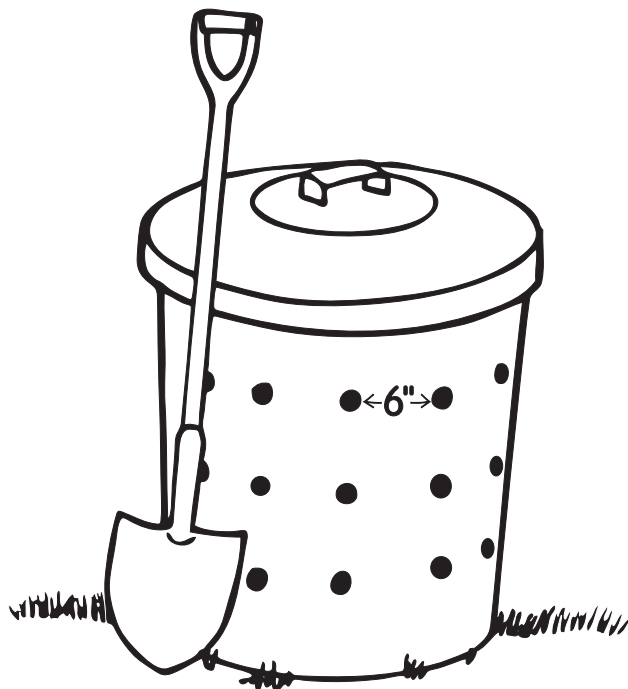
- garbage can with cover
- coarse sawdust, straw or wood chips

Tools

- drill
- pitchfork, shovel or compost turner
- work gloves

Building a Garbage Can Composter

1. Drill three rows of holes 4 to 6 inches apart around the sides of the garbage can. Then drill several holes in the base of the can. The holes allow air movement and drainage of excess moisture.
2. Place 2 to 3 inches of dry sawdust, straw or wood chips in the bottom of the can to absorb excess moisture and let the composting material drain.



Adding Wastes

Add fruit, vegetable waste, garden waste, grass clippings or other bulking material. Make sure not to add too much of any one waste at a time.

Maintaining Your Compost

Regularly mix or turn the composting material with a pitchfork, shovel or compost turner and keep it covered. Turning adds air and mixes the waste materials, preventing odors from the composting material. Odors from the compost pile may attract animals and cause neighbors to complain.

Adapted from Cornell Cooperative Extension GPAE90712

Bill Cochran, Associate Specialist

William A. Carney, Extension Associate Professor

Louisiana State University Agricultural Center
William B. Richardson, Chancellor

Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
David J. Boethel, Vice Chancellor and Director

Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service
Paul D. Coreil, Vice Chancellor and Director

LSU AgCenter

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Wastes to Resources