

Backyard Composting

Wooden Box Bin



A wooden box bin can be built inexpensively by using wooden pallets. Or you can use lumber to make a nicer bin. The costs will vary, depending on whether you use pallets or new lumber. Used pallets are often available from local businesses, manufacturers or landfills.

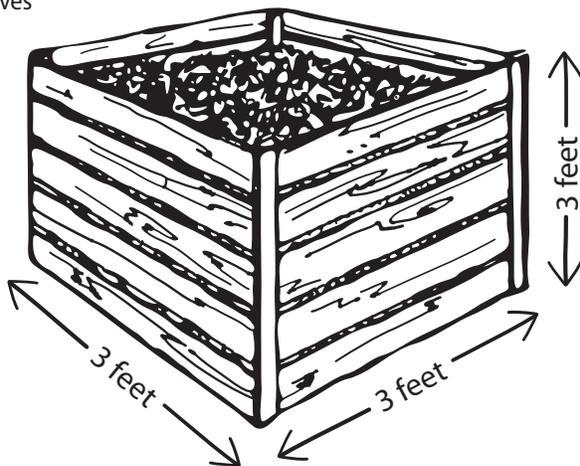
What You Need

Materials

- 4 wooden pallets (5 if you want a bottom in the container), sized to make a four-sided container at least 3 feet x 3 feet x 3 feet
- nails
- wire ties
- or
- 1 12-foot length of 2 x 4 lumber
- 5 12-foot lengths of lumber, 6" x 3/4"
- nails

Tools

- saw
- sledge hammer
- work gloves



Building a Wooden Box Bin

If using wooden pallets:

1. Nail or wire four pallets together to make a four-sided container at least 3 feet x 3 feet x 3 feet. The container is ready to use.
2. A fifth pallet can be used as a base to allow more air to get into the pile and to increase the stability of the bin.

If using lumber:

3. Saw the 12-foot length of 2 x 4 lumber into four pieces, each 3 feet long, to be used as corner posts.
4. Choose a 3-foot-square site for your compost bin, and drive the four posts into the ground 3 feet apart, at the corners of the square.
5. Saw each of the five 12-foot boards into four 3-foot pieces. Allowing five boards to a side and starting at the bottom, nail the boards to the posts to make a four-sided container. Leave 1-inch space between the boards to allow air to get into the pile.
6. If you wish to decrease your composting time, build a second holding unit so the wastes in one can mature while you add wastes to the other.

Adding Wastes

Add wastes as they become available. Non-wood materials such as grass clippings and garden weeds work best. You can speed the process by chopping or shredding the wastes. If you have two units, when the first unit is full let the compost mature and start adding wastes to the second unit.

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.

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Wastes to Resources