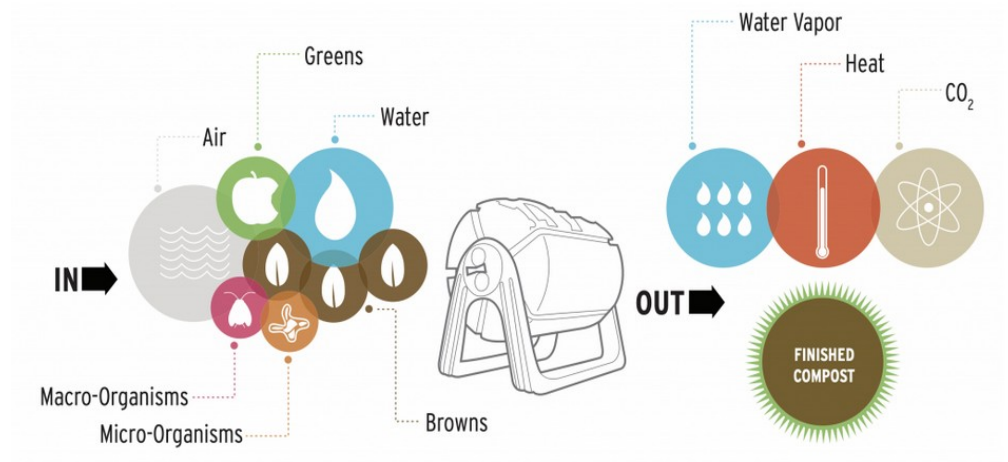


Backyard Composting in Media

What is composting:

Composting is a great way to recycle leaves, yard waste and kitchen scraps, reduce trash output and make a rich soil conditioner.

Media Borough has a great composting program, but if you want use more of your leaves and can do a little more work, you can do it yourself, at home.



Why compost at home:

- Using fallen leaves as mulch in your garden is one of the best ways to improve your soil.
- Reduce the waste going to the landfill.
- Save money buying less or even no fertilizer for you lawn and garden
- Grow healthy, vibrant plants by recycling nutrients
- Reduce or preferably eliminate chemical use.
- Help retain soil moisture and protect the groundwater.
- Provide habitat for arthropods, earthworms, and a plethora of beneficial microorganisms.

How to compost:

1. **Collect**
Rake your leaves and yard waste into low piles or rows.
2. **Shred**
Once you have piles, you'll need to shred them, using a lawn mower, weed wacker or a leaf shredder.
3. **Store**
If you like, you can just leave the shredded material on your lawn or gardens.
Or, store the shredded leaves along with kitchen waste in a compost pile or bin.
4. **Add water**
Ideally, a household compost pile will be about as wet as a wrung-out sponge.
5. **Wait, turn, wait**
A typical compost pile will take approximately three to four months for material to decompose. It will be necessary to turn the pile frequently during the initial three to four weeks and once or twice thereafter.

How much space is needed

Not Much

- A compost pile should be about 3 cubic feet (3 feet tall, 3 feet wide and 3 feet deep).
- Compost bins are typically 2ft by 2ft by 2.5ft. This is just over 1/3 cubic foot.

What to put in the compost pile

<u>green materials</u>	<u>brown materials</u>
Shredded leaves, plant cuttings and weeds	Dead weeds and dry leaves
Thatch	Clipped brush
Grass clippings. While they will compost, they can also benefit your lawn if left on your yard	Wood ash, unless a fire-starter was used
Fruit and vegetable peels and other fruit wastes	Egg shells
Coffee grounds and tea bags	Wood chips

Do not use:

- Meat or bones
- Cheese, salad dressing, oils and other fats; they can cause odors and attract animals
- Plant material with visible signs of disease or insect infestation or sprayed with pesticides
- Weeds and invasive plants, such as ivy, that can easily grow from root or stem cuttings.
- Colored or glossy paper
- Animal waste

When to make and apply compost

- Start a compost pile any time. Fall is an obvious choice for many due to the abundance of leaves
- Fall is an excellent time to empty a finished compost bin and top your garden beds.
- Early spring is a fine time to apply compost. Compost breaks down slowly over time, which is one of its benefits.

Composting Resources

Media Borough Curbside Composting	https://www.mediaborough.com/199/Curbside-Composting-Yard-Waste-Food-Comp
Home Composting: A Guide for Home Gardeners	https://extension.psu.edu/home-composting-a-guide-for-home-gardeners
Composting 101	https://www.nrdc.org/stories/composting-101
How To Make Leaf Mulch: Turn Leaf Litter into Organic Mulch	https://theimpatientfarmer.com/leaves-as-mulch/
Leaf mulch: How to make and use leaf mulch in the garden	https://savvygardening.com/leaf-mulch/