

A 10 pole plot needs at least 2x 3x3 bins or equivalent.

Think Brown and Green

- Manure (preferably organic)
- Any non-animal food scraps: fruits, vegetables, peelings, coffee grounds and filters, tea leaves and tea bags
- Old wine
- Old herbs and spices
- Annual Weeds (knock off soil)
- Vegetable tops from the plot
- Excess Vegetables (Chop)
- Wood ash
- Small twigs
- Shredded paper, receipts, bags, etc (any non-glossy paper)
- Grass clippings

Grass clippings do make a great component but it swiftly goes slimy. Mix with dry or brown ingredients. At the very least, spread the grass out over the top of the pile.

Can need more time/ heat

- Some leaves (Oak, willow are best mowed when on grass or kept in a wire cage for leaf mould)
- Cardboard, egg cartons, toilet rolls
- Old string & twine of natural fabrics
- Nut shells
- Hair, human or otherwise
- Old, dry pasta
- Corn cobs
- Fruit Pits (from plums, avocados, grapes,)
- Pine needles /pine cones

Shredding

Large plots keep a large (ton) bag somewhere dry to store material. Take to a shredding working party.

- Hedge trimmings
- Prunings /twigs over finger size
- Raspberry, blackberry, brambles
- Corn haulms
- Brassica stalks (knock off soil)

No-Nos

- Pet droppings, especially dogs & cats
- Animal products — meat, bones, butter, milk, fish skins These products will “overheat” your compost pile and make it stink and attract animals). Put in OCC food waste
- Cooked food (put in OCC food waste)
- Coal Ash
- Heavily coloured paper

Weed Seed, Diseased Plants and Other Contaminants

Mostly fine if pile is hot. If you want to be absolutely sure that you won't spread **weeds** don't put weed seeds in the pile. Hoe before they set seed! If they have seeded, put in a bag to rot down and then add when turning. Always bag and rot down perennial weeds. The same goes for **diseases**. However, a good, hot pile will kill just about every seed and disease pathogen you can throw at it. Blight only lives on live plant material. The potato left in the soil is more of a problem.

There are some exceptions:

- Tomato wilt (fungus *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *lycopersici*)
- Tobacco Mosaic Virus (TMV),
- Clubroot (caused by the fungal pathogen *Plasmodiophora brassicae*),
- Rust (dry and burn)
- all require 21 days at 65°C to degrade.

Speeding Up the Process

Compost decomposes fastest between 50 and 70°C, so anything that will increase the heat will “cook” your compost faster. Here are four tips for faster composting:

- 1. Chop and shred larger items, which makes it easier for the bacteria to break them down. For example, one easy way is to slice and dice garden waste is to run your lawn mower over leaves and other garden waste. Take scissors to newsprint or cardboard.**
- 2. Turn, turn, turn.**
- 3. Give your compost heap a “big meal” versus small snacks. Collect all your organic waste over a couple of days and then add it in one big bunch. The more you add at one time, the more your compost will heat up.**
- 4. Keep your compost pile in the sun. The heat will speed up the process**