

The Gainesville Zero Waste News

3 Steps To Get The Most Out Of Your Backyard Compost Pile

Whether you're composting to get a high-quality, free soil amendment for your garden or trying to stop your food scraps from going to the landfill, backyard composting is an excellent step toward becoming zero waste.



You only need a few things to kickstart your compost pile while controlling odor: heat, air, and water.

- 1. Turn Up The Heat.** The nitrogen from your kitchen waste can get your compost cooking! As the pile heats up, it does two things: it helps break down the lignin (woody tissues) and kills the pathogens (“bad bugs”) that might be lurking in your old food scraps.
- 2. Let It Breathe.** You just need to “turn the pile,” which means using a shovel or pitchfork to move everything around. As you expose previously covered parts of the pile to fresh air, the bacteria will get a new shot of life and continue doing their best for the mound.
- 3. Hydrate, But Don't Overdo It.** Your amazing compost pile will do better with the right amount of water. Add too much, and you're left with a soggy, stinky mess. Too little, and the bacteria in there can't survive. Remember, bacteria need air and water, just like we do.

For more information on Backyard Composting, visit gainesvillefl.gov/Recycle.

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