

COMPOST

The Basics

What Is compost, anyway?

Compost is the product of decomposed organic material (food scraps, leaves, newspaper, old plant material, etc!). The process of decomposition creates a soil-like material that is rich in nutrients and biological activity. Think of it as nature's fertilizer.

The Benefits of Compost

Compost puts nutrients back into the soil (therefore reducing the need for synthetic fertilizer), supports beneficial microorganisms, increases soil's water retention, reduces erosion, and helps grow healthy, productive harvests.

How can I use compost in my home garden?

A little bit of compost can go a long way in terms of improving soil health. While you can grow plants in 100% finished compost, it is better used as a soil amendment mixed with native soils or potting mix. If you are starting with a brand new planter or garden bed, you should aim for 20-30% compost mixed into the top 12 inches of soil.

If you are bringing home compost to an already established garden bed, give "top-dressing" a try! In the spring or fall, simply sprinkle 1-2 inches of the compost over the top of the soil surface and water thoroughly. If you want to incorporate compost during the active growing season, you can "side-dress" the plants by adding a few handfuls around the base of each plant, making sure the compost doesn't directly touch the stem of the plant.