

## COMPOST TOTE

3 parts brown to 1 part green (with water)

Soil is the most complex biodynamic material on our planet that sustains all life and must be nurtured. Making your own compost is the best and easiest way to feed your plants. Compost reduces the need for chemical fertilizers. Watering with Compost Tea can make an immediate difference that you can see. Compost will happen anyway.

### BROWNS (Carbon)

Used coffee filters, shredded cardboard, paper rolls, newspaper (nothing glossy)

Local hay, corn stalks, nut shells

Egg shells and shredded cardboard egg cartons

Fall leaves

Sawdust, wood chips

Sticks for aeration

### GREENS (Nitrogen)

Coffee grounds (will not add acid to your soil), tea leaves/bags

Grass clippings

Fresh leaves

Houseplant trimmings, deadheads from flowers, dead plants

Manures

Vegetable, melon rinds, and fruit peelings/scrap

Weeds that haven't gone to seed

### MAKING COMPOST TEA

1. Fill a 5 gal bucket 1/3 full of quality finished compost.
2. Add water to the top of the bucket. Rainwater is best.
3. Let the mixture steep for 3-4 days. Stir occasionally to add oxygen.
4. Strain the mixture through cheesecloth, burlap, or some old shirt into another bucket. Add the remaining solids to your garden.
5. Dilute the remaining liquid with water to a weak tea consistency. Pour around the base of your plant. Then, observe your plants over the next few days.
6. Use immediately for optimal absorption around plants. For potted plants dilute farther.
7. Foliar tea: add couple drops of mild dishwashing liquid so it will adhere to leaves.

<http://www.homecompostingmadeeasy.com/composttea.html>

Ingredients vary depending upon what you have access to.

**Egg shells** Mostly 98% calcium carbonate with 27 micro nutrients. Slow release fertilizer. Add 2 Tbls. to tomatoes at time of planting to prevent blossom end rot. Use water from boiled egg shells, too. Pulverized your egg shells.

**Banana skins** 5 of the 6 main micro nutrients. All essential to soil health 3-25% phosphorous, and 42% potassium, magnesium, sulphur, manganese, calcium, and sodium. Pulverized/chopped into 1/4" pieces up to 4" deep in soil.

**Dried leaves** are the bulk of your compost making 3 parts brown to 1 part green.

**Coffee grounds** Aren't acidic to your soil. But, can raise nitrogen levels. Potassium, phosphorous, encourage beneficial microbes and worms.

**Compost Tea** Aerated Compost Tea can improve your soil. Water based and oxygen rich. Can improve aerobic bacteria, nematodes, fungi and protozoa, can bioremediate toxins. Aids in water retention as well.

**Fish parts** can be worked into your soil to add nutrients.

**Rabbit manure** High in nitrogen and won't burn your plants.

**Wood chips** Excellent source of building soil. High in carbon and cellulose. Need nitrogen and time to decompose - within a season or two it returns them back into soil. Can help to retain nutrients and moisture over time. Helps to provide mycorrhizal fungi back to the decomposition process. Creates a forest floor.

**Mulch** breaks down in 3 months. It is the food of your garden as well as insulating roots from heat and cold stress.

Water your soil, not your plants. Chemical fertilizers can kill the good bugs and microbes in your soil.

**Worms** can always be added, you just have to continue feeding them. Amount found online. But, you can't make Compost Tea once worms are added.

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