

## TROUBLESHOOTING COMPOST ISSUES

### Collecting food scraps in the kitchen:

- Empty your scrap vessel every 2-4 days or whenever you notice any odors.
- To avoid all odors and indoor pests (fruit flies): keep food scraps in the refrigerator or freezer until just before pickup, especially when you may be away for a few days.
- If using liner bags in your kitchen scrap bucket: after removing the liner, wash the bucket with a little soap and allow it to dry overnight before inserting a new liner.
- Wrap meat, fish and shellfish in newspaper or compostable paper like a burrito.
- Drain wet items such as teabags and coffee grounds well before putting them in your bin.

### Curbside collection cart:

- After collection, if any liquids remain in the cart, dump remaining liquid onto the grass, rinse it out, and leave it in the sun to dry out.
- Keep bin out of the sun to prevent heat that may increase odors.

### Backyard composting:

- Do not put meat, seafood, or dairy products into your backyard compost pile.
- If your compost isn't breaking down at all, turn it and add water.
- If your compost smells sour or rotten, mix in more dry material such as leaves into the pile and turn it. Add water once the pile no longer smells bad.

## COMPOSTING RESOURCES

- [www.mass.gov/composting-organics](http://www.mass.gov/composting-organics)
- [www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home](http://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home)
- [www.ecocycle.org/backyard-composting](http://www.ecocycle.org/backyard-composting)

### Contact Us

[newtonma.gov/recycling](http://newtonma.gov/recycling)  
(617) 796-1000  
[recycling@newtonma.gov](mailto:recycling@newtonma.gov)

City of Newton  
Department of Public Works  
Sustainable Materials Management Division

### Get Connected



CITY OF NEWTON  
SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION



## COMPOSTING



Department of Public Works  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459  
(617) 796-1000

## WHAT IS COMPOST?



Compost is organic material made by microorganisms found in nature that can be added to soil. Currently, over 25% of the trash stream is food waste that could be composted.

## WHY IS COMPOSTING IMPORTANT?

**It's good for the environment.** Composting is often the highest and best use for food waste from our homes. By composting, a new resource is created instead of the water and nutrients going to disposal.

**Save time and money.** Using compost in a home garden reduces soil and fertilizer purchases. Composting can also reduce disposal costs.

**Enrich the soil.** Compost reduces erosion by improving soil structure and adds essential nutrients to the soil, helping to grow trouble-free plants with less water, fertilizer, or pesticides.

## COMPOSTING BASICS

Composting requires four basic ingredients:

1. Browns – This includes leaves, woodchips, and compostable paper. These carbon-rich materials are slow to break down.
2. Greens – This includes food scraps, grass clippings and coffee grounds. These nitrogen-rich materials are quick to break down.
3. Water – if using an open bin, rain will suffice; if using a bin with a top, add water after turning the compost.
4. Oxygen (air) – turning a compost pile replenishes oxygen.

Aim for a 3:1 ratio of browns to greens; this does not need to be perfect. Many households generate more yard waste than food waste. In this case, it is easy to achieve roughly a 3:1 ratio.

Alternate layers of browns and greens over time. When there's at least 2 layers, turn the compost with a hand tiller or pitchfork. Turning the compost pile can be done infrequently, once every 1-2 months during spring, summer, and fall. After turning the compost pile, wet the pile with water. Harvest compost 1-2 times per year by opening up the bin and digging out the bottom of the compost pile.

## COMPOSTING OPTIONS IN NEWTON

### CURBSIDE COMPOST PICKUP

The City of Newton has partnered with Black Earth Compost who offers weekly curbside food waste collection. This service collects all food waste including fruit and vegetable peels, meat/bones, seafood shells, and other kitchen scraps along with paper towels and paper napkins. Food scraps are composted by Black Earth to become a soil amendment.



In Newton, the cost is \$59.99 for six months, plus a one-time starter kit cost of \$34, which includes a 13-gallon lockable cart and two rolls of compostable liner bags.

**Subscribe for service at:**  
[www.blackearthcompost.com](http://www.blackearthcompost.com)



### BACKYARD COMPOSTING

The City of Newton offers two compost bin options to residents for just \$25 each. MassDEP grant funding supports the price reduction.

Both compost bins and kitchen scrap buckets are available for purchase at City Hall Customer Service or online at [www.newtonma.gov/billpay](http://www.newtonma.gov/billpay). Pick up items at the Newton Resource Recovery Center with receipt.

Both compost bin styles are easy to assemble and allow for efficient, aerobic composting. They are made from a minimum of 50% post-consumer recycled plastic. The kitchen scrap collection bucket is handy to use for transport out to the compost bin.

#### Earth Machine



\$25 (resident)  
\$45 (non-resident)  
Capacity: 10.5 ft<sup>3</sup>  
Height: 33"  
Diameter: 33"

#### New Age Composter



\$25 (resident)  
\$53 (non-resident)  
Capacity: 24 ft<sup>3</sup>  
Height: 30"  
Diameter: Variable

#### Kitchen Scrap Bucket



\$8  
Capacity: 2 gal  
Snap lid designed to minimize odors; dishwasher safe