

OMF W.I.S.E ~ First Friday Facts

Home Composting

What is composting? Composting is nature's way of recycling organic materials such as leaves, twigs, grass clippings, and food scraps into a healthy fertilizer for soil.

Benefits to home composting: Saves you money on fertilizing and watering your yard, reduces trash odors, saves you and the City money on garbage hauling, and reduces methane gases from the environment.

Common methods of home composting:

- **Open Air:** Use a corner of your yard or a holding bin to pile yard debris, soil, and other compostable materials. Keep moist and turn a few times a month. Use decomposed compost a couple times a year.
- **Container or Tumbler:** Add damp, shredded material to a homemade or manufactured composting bin or tumbler so it's three-quarters full. Add compostable material and turn every 2-3 days. Compost will be ready to use in a few weeks.
- **Worm Composting:** Use a wide, shallow container and fill half-full with damp, shredded newspaper and soil. Add red worms (which you can buy at a local retailer or online). Add compostable material every couple days. Sift out the compost soil every month. This method is often used for composting kitchen scraps.



Quick Facts:

- Composting and recycling can reduce the amount of garbage you generate by up to 80%
- A family who composts can divert over 500 pounds of kitchen scraps and yard waste per year
- Almost anything can be composted, EXCEPT meat, fish, dairy, bones, grease, or cooking oil - DO NOT add those to your compost

Resources for Composting:

[Metro](#) has a lot of information about composting options and demonstration sites here in Portland. [CompostGuide.com](#) answers all your how-to questions. Even experienced composters will appreciate their handy chart showing how different materials affect your compost. [The Office of Sustainable Development](#) runs a program to help businesses compost food scraps and they have some good resources; stay tuned for future residential programs.



This Friday Fact is brought to you by the OMF "W.I.S.E Guys & Gals": Workplace Innovators for a Sustainable Earth, OMF's new sustainability team. Watch for new tips every first Friday of the month!