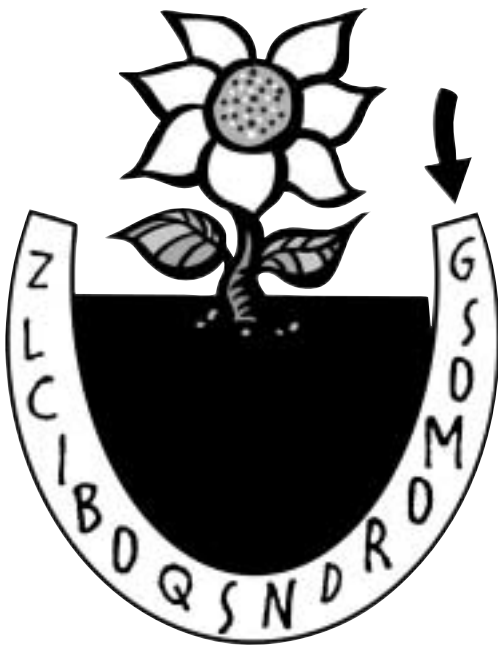


Crazy about Compost

Composting saves landfill space and turns garbage to goodness. Try it at home or at school!

What do you get from compost? To find out, start at the arrow and write down every other letter in the space below.







Loose soil makes it easier for plant roots to spread out.



Make your own compost.

You need:

- **Garbage** , OR , at least 3 feet wide and 3 feet deep
- Big plastic **garbage bags** to line the  or 
- **Soil** (with earthworms and bugs)
- **Twigs or wood chips**
- **Compost ingredients**
- A long **stick** or **shovel** to stir the compost

Before you start:

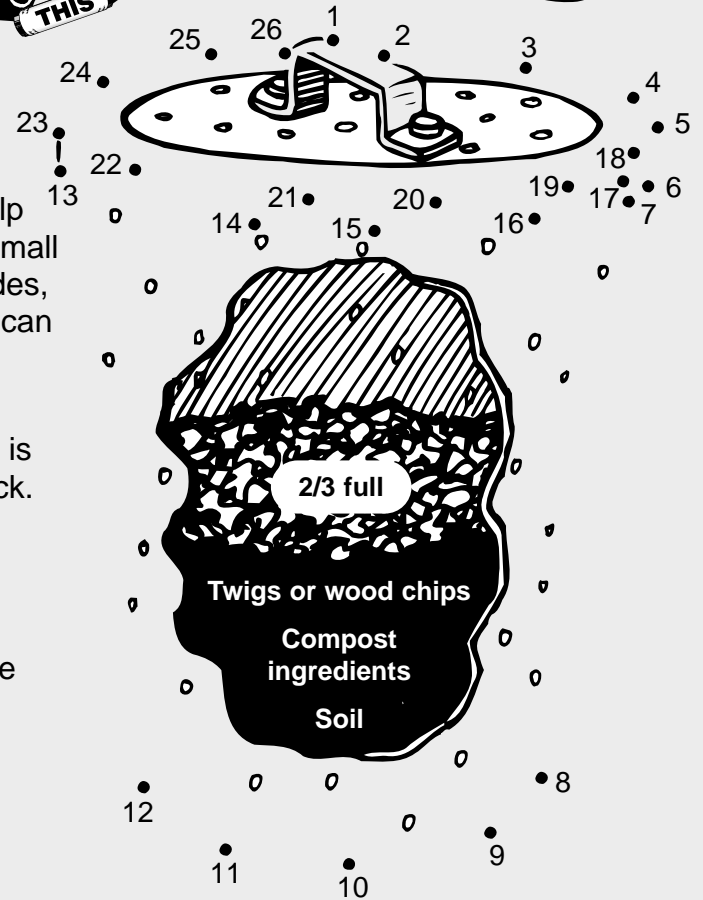
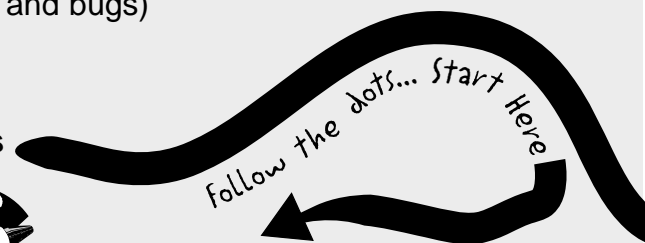
Ask an adult to help you poke 25–30 small holes in the lid, sides, and bottom of the can for air and water.

Step 1. Build up layers. Each layer is about 8 inches thick.

Step 2. Pour on enough water to moisten the pile.

Step 3. Make more layers and water them.

Step 4. Each time you add compost ingredients add



Let nature's recyclers go to work!

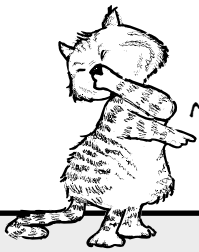
Use the stick or shovel to mix the pile every two to four days. In one or two months, your compost will become dark brown and crumbly. It is ready to use on your lawn, houseplants, or garden!

Tip for Grown-ups:

Over-fertilizing lawns and improper use of pesticides can upset the soil's natural community. Use compost instead of chemical fertilizers. It's earth-friendly, effective, and free. Spread compost over the ground at the base of plants to give them needed nutrients.

For more helpful tips about composting, go to this website: www.extension.umn.edu





Don't use meat or bones. They will make your compost smell bad--and attract pests!

Don't miss Mulch

MULCH is a layer of nonliving materials. People can spread it on top of the soil around plants. Why use mulch? Mulch shades and cools the soil. It keeps moisture in the soil. Mulch protects the soil from packing down. Best of all, it stops pesky weeds from growing. Mulch can be:

- Wood chips
- Dry leaves
- Grass clippings
(with NO weeds or chemical weed killers)
- Rocks
- Compost

Compost ingredients:

Fill in the missing vowels.

A c _ ff _ _

gr _ _ nds)

B gr _ ss

cl _ pp _ ngs

C f _ _ d scr _ ps

D d _ c _ y _ ng

l _ _ v _ s

E v _ gg _ _

p _ _ ls

F

G

fr _ _ t
c _ r _ s

Try This!

How thick should a mulch layer be? See for yourself!

First, choose two plants growing in your garden, yard, schoolyard, or nearby park. Then...

1. Put 1 inch of mulch around the base of plant #1.
2. Put 3 inches of mulch around plant #2.
3. Check in one month.

I predict _____.

This is what happened: _____

What I want to know now: _____

Go on a Mulch Hunt!

How many places can you find mulch around plants?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardens | <input type="checkbox"/> At home | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schoolyard | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbor's yard | <input type="checkbox"/> Boulevards |

Place	Kind of mulch	Any Weeds?	
		Yes	No

Tip for Grown-ups:

Avoid "beaver lodge" mulching around trees. Spread the mulch evenly and leave a 3-4 inch air space around the base of your tree.