

Compost Trouble Shooting

Too Dry

Causes

- Too many 'brown materials' being added to the bin e.g. leaves or paper. These take a long time to break down unless shredded very well or mixed with lots of 'green materials'.
- Compost is not being watered enough.
- Too much air in bin.

Effect

- Compost does not decompose properly due to the lack of moisture.
- Microorganisms, earthworms and insects need water for survival.
- Compost becomes cool and inactive.

What can you do?

- Add 'green materials' such as grass clippings or vegetable peelings.
- Leave the lid off your bin or carpet off your heap, so next time it rains moisture gets trapped.
- Instead of watering your compost you could add a liquid activator. There are biological types on the market, but there are natural activators too. Try soaking nettles or comfrey in water and then adding it to your compost.
- Only water the compost if it needs it. Though it may appear dry at the sides and top, it could still be wet in the middle. Turning the compost will automatically balance up the moisture content.

Remember

The compost in a bin or heap should be as moist as a wrung out sponge.

The organisms that compost kitchen and garden waste need a balance of water, air, heat and food to survive, this is what you are aiming for in your compost heap.

If you print this out when you have finished with it why not rip it up and put it in your compost heap!