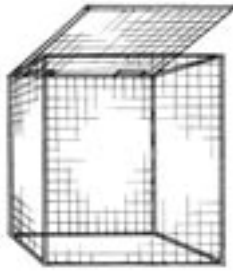


COMPOST CAGE

what you need...



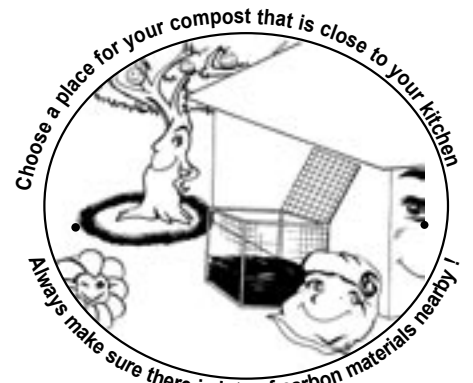
Nitrogen materials :
 • food scraps or
 • fresh green leaves



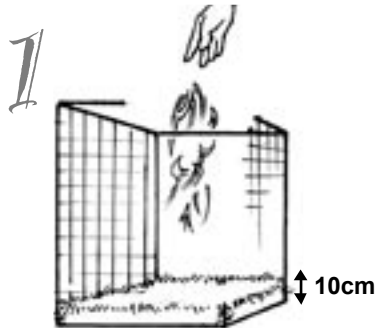
A closed container with air holes such as the "Compost Cage" shown here



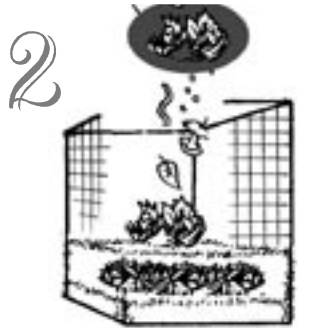
Carbon materials :
 • sawdust or
 • rice husks or
 • dried leaves



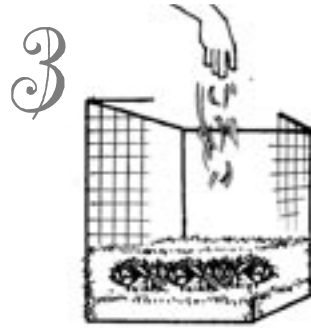
what you do...



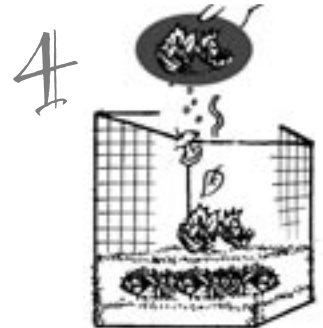
Line the base of your "Compost cage" with about 10 cm of carbon material



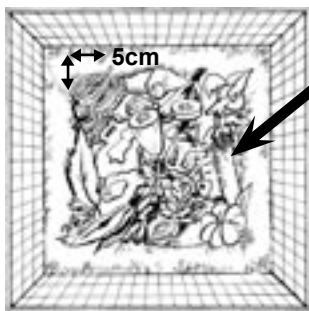
Throw some kitchen scraps (nitrogen) on top - make sure they fall in the center



Put more carbon material - enough to cover all the kitchen scraps (nitrogen)



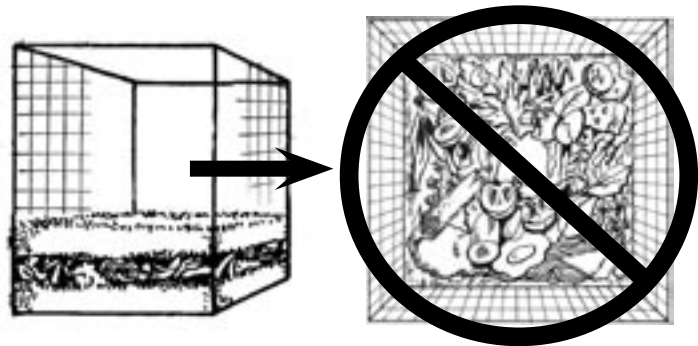
Place more kitchen scraps (nitrogen) as required & repeat the process as before



5 cm from edge - OK

REMEMBER !

1. Make sure the kitchen scraps don't fall on the edge of the cage - have a 5 cm border of carbon materials all around the edges.
2. Keep your kitchen scraps & carbon ratios even.



touching the edge - NOT OK



over time your compost will settle & become smaller



when the "Compost Cage" is full, lift it up and move it to another place.

Your compost is ready to use when it is black and crumbly.

Any problems contact Eco-Trainer :
ecotrainer@idepfoundation.org



www.idepfoundation.org

Troubleshooting Composting Problems

The compost pile is only damp and warm only in the middle of the pile.

Probable Cause

The compost pile is too small, or cold weather may have slowed composting processes down.

Suggested Solution

If you are only composting in piles, make sure your pile is at least 1 meter high and 1 meter wide. With a composting cage or triangle composting system, the pile doesn't need to be so large.

Nothing is happening. Compost pile doesn't seem to be heating up at all.

Probable Cause

1. Not enough nitrogen material
2. Not enough oxygen getting to compost
3. Not enough moisture in compost pile
4. Compost is finished - ready to use!

Suggested Solution

1. Make sure you have enough nitrogen rich sources like manure, grass clippings or food scraps.
 2. Mix up the pile so it can breathe, or switch to compost cage or triangle system.
 3. Mix up the pile and water it with the hose so that there is more moisture in the pile - a completely dry pile won't compost.
-

Matted leaves / clippings aren't decomposing.

Probable Cause

Not enough aeration, and / or lack of moisture.

Suggested Solution

1. Avoid thick layers of only one type of material. Too much of something like leaves, paper or grass clippings won't break down well.
2. Break up the layers and mix up the pile so that there is a good mix of materials.
3. Shred into small pieces any large materials that aren't breaking down well.

The compost smells like rancid butter, vinegar or rotten eggs.

Probable Cause

Not enough oxygen, and / or the compost pile is too wet, or compacted.

Suggested Solution

1. Mix up the pile so that it gets some aeration and can breathe. Or use a compost cage or triangle system.
 2. Add coarse dry materials like straw, hay or leaves to soak up excess moisture.
 3. If smell is too bad, add dry materials on top and wait until it dries out a bit before you mix the pile.
-

The compost smells like ammonia.

Probable Cause

Not enough carbon materials in the compost

Suggested Solution

Add more brown carbon materials like sawdust, rice husks, leaves, straw, hay, shredded newspaper, etc.

The compost is attracting rodents, flies, or other animals.

Probable Cause

Inappropriate materials (meat / oil), or the food-like material is too close to the surface or sides of the compost pile.

Suggested Solution

Bury kitchen scraps near the center of the pile. Don't add inappropriate materials (bones / meat) to your compost. Switch to a compost cage.

The compost is attracting insects, millipedes, slugs, etc.

This is normal composting, and part of the natural process. It is not a problem.

The compost is attracting Fire Ants

Probable Cause

Pile could be too dry, not hot enough, and / or has kitchen scraps too close to the surface.

Suggested Solution

Make sure your pile has a good mix of materials to heat up, and is kept moist enough.