

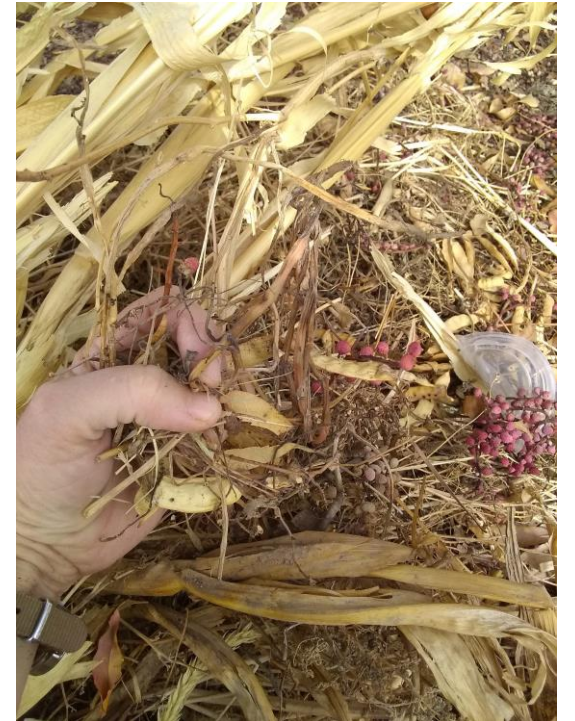
# Composting

What, Why, and Where?

© Anna Van Devender 2021

# What?

- Compost is decomposed organic matter. “Organic” here means from living things (i.e. leaves, sticks, fruit, small animals, poop from small animals) instead of from nonliving things (rocks, sand, metal, plastic).
- Which parts are organic?
- Which parts are nonliving?



# Why?

- Compost is useful for growing new living things. It adds nutrients to the soil to feed plants, and helps the soil have both water and air for the roots.

# Where?

- You can buy compost at the store, find compost in your yard, or make compost in your yard or house.

# Composting

How?

# How: The basics

- When you make compost, you are “composting”

How much time do you want to spend composting per week?

- 0 minutes?
- 0 most weeks and 10 minutes some weeks?
- 5 minutes most weeks and a few hours a couple times a year?

How much compost do you want to make, or how often do you want it to be ready?

# Main ways to make compost

- A. Just leave leaves and sticks on the ground.
- B. Speed up natural decomposition.
- C. Use a compost bin that you make or buy.
- D. Use a worm bin that you use or buy.

Which ways do you think are faster? Easier?



# Method A)

Just leave leaves and sticks on the ground

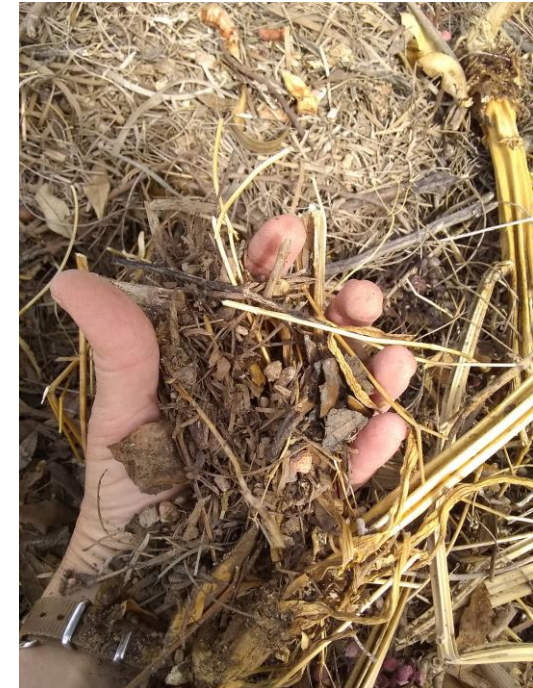
- → In a few years, they will decompose with the help of critters from below and moisture from below or from rain.



# Method B)

## Speed up natural decomposition

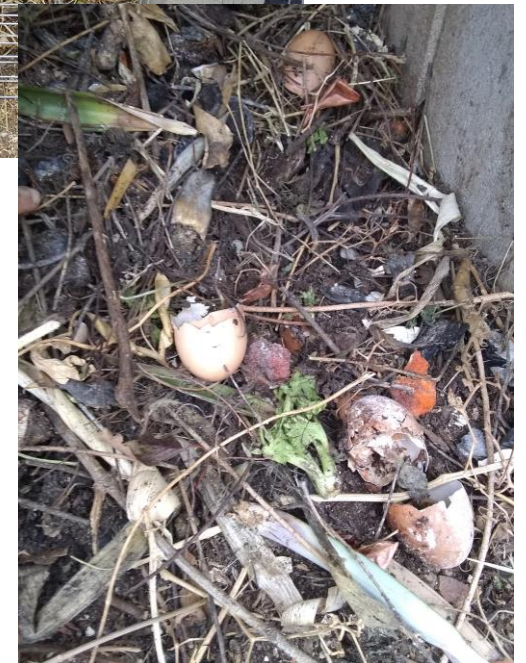
- Water a pile of leaves and sticks, and stir it up sometimes →  
**In a year or so you will have richer soil.**



# Method C)

Use a compost bin that you make or buy

- Use a container with drainage, make a box or separate area of your yard, or shop for a barrel or box that makes it easier to turn the compost
- → Add piles of organic matter you rake up from your yard and scraps from your kitchen
- → Each time you add something fresh, cover it with something dry



# Method C continued)

- → Mix it all up and add water about once a week
- → In **less than a year** you will have new soil.
  
- More stirring and water → faster composting
- Less stirring and water → slower composting

# Method D)

Use a worm bin that you make or buy

- Use a container with drainage, make a box or a hole in the ground, or shop for a worm bin
- → Start with a little soil from your yard or the store, add fresh kitchen scraps, cover with shredded newspaper or cardboard
- → Add red wigglers!



## Method D Continued)

Use a worm bin that you make or buy

- → Feed the worms about once a week, adding a dry layer over the fresh scraps, and adding moisture or dumping out extra water as needed
- → In a **few months**, you will have new soil.

# Which ways are faster? Easier?

- A. Just leave leaves and sticks on the ground.
- B. Speed up natural decomposition.
- C. Use a compost bin that you make or buy.
- D. Use a worm bin that you use or buy.

Slow			Fast

Hard			Easy

Which way do you compost or want to compost?