



Earth MOM™

Composting 101

Why do I compost? Almost twenty percent of our landfills are compostable materials that don't compost due to lack of air and water. Composting gives me free, high-quality compost for the garden. The trash is lighter and doesn't stink. Finally, the teachable moments around the compost bin have given me some of my favorite as a parent. It's fun to dig around in there. It's interesting to wonder together what life would be like without all the bugs, bacteria and fungi that decompose our leftovers and make a place for us to grow food. Growing our own soil from food is easy and lets my kids learn sustainability first-hand.

Busy parent's composting tips:

- » Make composting as easy as you need it to be.
- » Pick a spot that is convenient to take the compost to, yet isn't right outside your back door.
- » A metal pot with a lid is washable and light enough for the kids to take out.
- » If you're an avid gardener, you probably know to layer your greens (kitchen waste) and browns (leaves or straw) and even enjoy turning the compost. However, you can just dig a hole and dump your compost there—the worms will turn it for you! It is slower, but your garden will still benefit. It's best to cover your compost as you go with a layer of leaves, straw or dirt.
- » Keep animal products to a minimum—throwing a hunk of meat in your compost will make it smell awful. Put small pieces down deep in the compost, especially those turkey bones and meat from Thanksgiving. You can pour old soup or milk over it and turn it. If there larger pieces it should be buried in a separate spot six to eight inches down.
- » Don't forget to toss in those pumpkins when Halloween is over.

To learn more about composting, check the web, bike by the City of Eugene River House compost for lovely examples, or take a free composting class with OSU Extension on October 15th at BRING Recycling.

Earth MOM™ is courtesy of Nearby Nature and Eugene True Value Hardware



Visit True Value for all your composting tools.