



## Composting 101

Composting is a key part of maintaining your garden box and the GROW sites in general. By composting properly, we cut down on food and garden waste while also creating a powerful all-natural soil amendment. Please read below for tips on using the on-site compost.

### General Guide:

- Cut down all pieces of your dead plant material into small (less than 4 inch) pieces.
- Clipping shears are great for cutting your compostables into small pieces. Shears can typically be found in the shed.
- Bring your compostable material to the bins. If a bin is full, place your materials in a different bin.
- Are the compost bins looking unruly?
- **You can compost anything organic from your garden.** That includes:
  - Overripe produce (but try and pick it before it gets to this point!)
  - Plant materials (i.e. dead leaves)

### Guide for Compost Crew:

Generally, the compost needs to be turned every week to two weeks. The key to healthy compost is to keep a good ratio of nitrogen-based and carbon-based materials.

#### Turning the compost:

- The compost needs to be turned every week or two.

#### Adjusting the temperature:

- If it is too cold, add high-nitrogen materials like grass. Add new composting material if the pile is only warm in the center.

#### Adjusting moisture:

- Don't let it dry out.
- Don't let it get too wet. If it smells sulfurous, turn it.

#### Adjusting smell:

- Turn it every week or two.

- If it begins to smell sharp, add high-carbon organics.

**In winter:**

- Unprocessed compost that is left at the end of the summer can be composted again the following spring if you let it freeze in the compost bin

[Check out this helpful guide for troubleshooting the compost](#), and check out [this guide for turning the compost](#).

**Question?**