

# How to Make Compost

What can kids do to save the environment? Have they ever heard of saving up garbage and then using it later? Probably not. It may sound pretty gross, but your kids will soon find out that it's a great way to help the earth!

## What You Need:

- Vegetable kitchen scraps
- Large pail with lid
- Shovel
- Leaves or cut grass

## What You Do:

1. Save your vegetable scraps, such as banana peels, potato skins, and rotting tomatoes, in a pail. Don't save meat, bones, fat, cheese, milk, or any other animal products. Don't save plastics, glass, or paper either—these are recycled in other ways.
2. Help your child choose an appropriate place to age the vegetable material in your yard or in a public gardening space. Look for a shady, sheltered area of dirt.
3. When the pail is about half full, take it out to your selected compost area. Spread out a shallow layer of kitchen waste, then top with leaves or grass.
4. Build up your compost pile by adding a new layer of waste each time your pail of vegetable scraps is half full. Be sure to always top the pile with leaves or grass.
5. Sprinkle the compost lightly with water every few days. Don't soak the pile, just dampen it.
6. When the pile is about 3 feet (1 m) high, help your child turn it with a shovel.



**What's Going On?** Your saved-up kitchen waste decayed, becoming food for bacteria and earthworms. These little creatures helped produce a nutrient-rich all-natural organic fertilizer for your garden. Spread this rich, dark fertilizer around your trees and flowers. It will feed them, protect their roots from heat and frost, and keep them from drying out, so you'll be able to water less. Plus, by reusing vegetable waste, you and your child are taking the burden off of landfills, and taking the soil into your own hands!