



"Greens", most commonly food scraps, add nitrogen which is half of the balanced equation for healthy compost break down. Nitrogen is a crucial element for the microbes that do the heavy lifting in decomposition. "Greens" should be layered with "Browns".

"Browns", consisting of dried materials like leaves, pine needles, egg cartons, and unbleached paper products, finishes the mixture with carbon. Browns allow air flow and water drainage in the pile which is necessary for microbials to live and work. There should be a 2:1 or 3:1 ratio of 'greens' and 'browns'

Worms, roly polys, centipedes and microbes break down organic matter in three stages. These organisms thrive in warm, moist, oxygen rich environments. If the pile is too wet, compact or hot it can kill them off, so it is important to keep a healthy environment.

The finished product is a nutrient rich, dirt-like material. The natural proteins in compost help dirt bind together which holds nutrients and moisture better. Compost can be used as fertilizer in gardens, and the healthier soil it creates makes for healthier plants.

## How Does Composting Work?