



Do NOT add to your small home compost pile:

- Meat scraps, fish scraps, bones, animal fats
- Dairy products
- Nuts and nut butters
- Seeds such as old popcorn or decorative colored corn cobs
- Cooking oil
- Left over salad with dressing, left over food with oils or fats
- Dog, cat, pig and reptile manure and bedding/litter box material
- Wood shavings from plywood and pressure treated wood
- Weed seed heads and mature flower heads from flowers that set viable seed
- Pernicious rhizomes such as Canada thistle, quack grass, creeping charlie, gout weed, moneywort
- Hay (use straw) because hay comes with lots of weed seeds

Carbon: Nitrogen Ratio A carbon to nitrogen ratio of 25 parts nitrogen to 1 part carbon is ideal for the microbes involved in the composting process in a compost pile. The closer you get to this ideal balance the faster you will get the finished product.

C: N ratio in “fresh” or “green” material:

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Grass clippings | 15:1 - 20:1 |
| Vegetable wastes | 15:1(avg) (12:1 - 20:1 range) |
| Garden weeds | 20:1 |
| Fruit wastes | 35:1 |
| Coffee grounds | 20:1 |

C:N ratio in “dry” or “brown” material

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| Oak leaves | 50:1 (26:1 when still green) |
| Leaves, varied | 35:1 to 85:1 |
| Straw | 80:1 |
| Newspaper | 170:1 |
| Sawdust, fresh | 625:1 |

-Some composting guides suggest adding 75% brown materials to 25% green materials by volume. Some suggest 1/3 dry, 1/3 fresh, 1/3 soil by

weight. Keep it simple and add 4 inch layer of fresh and then a 4 inch layer of dry; keep on layering. Add 1 inch layer of soil from time to time.

-If you are adding only kitchen scraps you are close to the ideal C:N ratio with those scraps alone.

-Add layer of soil occasionally to inoculate pile w/ soil microbes & for texture.

-Keep pile moisture equivalent to a squeezed out sponge. Not too wet, not too dry