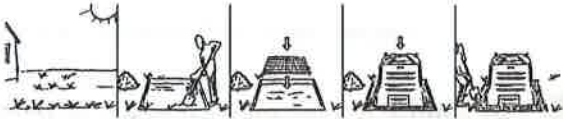




## Backyard Basics

Compost food scraps & yard debris at home.

**Compost:** Purchase a bin from your solid waste district or town or build your own durable, enclosed container. Line the bottom of the bin with wire-mesh hardware cloth to keep critters out.



Cover 1-part food scraps ("greens") with 3-parts dried yard waste, wood chips, sawdust, or shredded paper ("browns"). Mix occasionally and cover exposed food scraps with more browns to reduce odors. Empty the bin in the fall to make space for the scraps to freeze in the winter; shovel any fresh food scraps back into the bottom of the empty bin. The frozen winter scraps will decompose as they warm in the spring; add lots of browns and stir frequently at this time. Use compost on your lawn or plants.

**Solar Digester:** A different type of bin that nourishes nearby plants and breaks down food scraps, even meat and bones. Compost yard waste separately.



**Feed your chickens:** The gals love food scraps. Compost the scraps they don't eat.



**Worried about animals?** You don't have to compost meat & bones at home, even after 2020. Take them to a drop-off or throw them in the trash.

**Tip:** Wash your kitchen bucket regularly and/or toss a handful of dry browns in the bottom to absorb liquid. Cover with a lid.



## Composting in Bear Country

Composting well protects animals and people because it reduces the chance that you will accidentally feed an animal.



**Take down birdfeeders,** except when bears are hibernating. Bird seed draws bears into yards. Plant native flowers and shrubs that attract birds instead.



**Compost in a hard, durable bin,** ideally with a lid that would be challenging for a bear to open. Cover all food scraps with "browns" (dried yard debris, wood chips, sawdust, or shredded paper); they help contain odor. Frequently mix the pile.



**Don't compost meat and bones** at home. Bring them to a compost drop-off or put them in the trash.



**You have options!** You can bring food scraps to transfer stations and other local drop-offs. Consider drop offs in the spring when bears are most active.



## Curious Bear? Don't Feed It.



1. **Contact Vermont Fish & Wildlife** for more advice on deterring a bear in your yard **before it becomes a**

**problem.** Fill out this form to get in touch:

[Anrweb.vt.gov/FWD/FW/WildlifeBearReport.aspx](http://Anrweb.vt.gov/FWD/FW/WildlifeBearReport.aspx)



2. Bring food scraps to a drop-off for a while **OR** Surround your bin with an electric fence (smear peanut butter on the fence so the bear gets a little zap to the face).




**Why compost?** Food rotting in landfills releases methane, a greenhouse gas 25 times more damaging than carbon dioxide. If every Vermonter composted, it would reduce greenhouse gas emissions as much as taking 7,000 vehicles off the road each year (EPA Warm Model & GHG Overview).

**Tips:**

- Store food scrap, recycling, and trash containers in a shed or garage so they don't attract animals.
- Keep food scraps in the freezer until you're ready to take a trip to a drop-off.
- Buy local compost for your yard or plants. This supports composters and VT's soil and water quality.



**Learn more:**

- Explore [VTrecycles.com](http://VTrecycles.com), call VT DEC at 802-828-1138, or follow @VTrecycles  and @TheVermontDEC 
- Take the online [VT Master Composter course](#) offered by UVM Extension.
- Ask your local solid waste district or town if they offer compost classes or discounted bins. Find their contact information and website at [802recycles.com](http://802recycles.com).



# Compost with Confidence



State law bans food scraps from the trash.

- 1 At Home:** It could save you money on trash; *or*
  - 2 Drop-off:** Transfer stations, bag drops, and compost facilities accept food scraps; *or*
  - 3 Curbside Collection:** Ask your hauler if they pick up food scraps for composting.
- Questions?** Contact your local waste district or town at [802recycles.com](http://802recycles.com) or the VT Department of Environmental Conservation at 802-828-1138.

**Reduce before you compost!** A family of four spends ~\$1,500 a year on food they never eat. Give yourself a raise: reduce your food waste with tips from [SavetheFood.com](http://SavetheFood.com).

[VTrecycles.com](http://VTrecycles.com)  
 @VTrecycles   
 @TheVermontDEC 

