

# GIVE YOUR GARDEN NEW LIFE

## What is compost?

Compost is organic material that has been decomposed in a controlled manner. It is commonly referred to as black gold by gardeners and provides some fertility to plants. Compost, whether homemade or store bought, recycles nutrients and organic materials and helps grow trouble-free plants.



## FIND COMPOST NEAR YOU



### Check with your municipality

Many communities offer pickup or drop-off services for yard clippings. These materials are often composted by the municipality and the finished material may be available for sale.



### Visit retail or landscaping stores

Compost is often sold in bags at retail stores and in bulk by landscaping suppliers. Not all compost is created equal– it should look and feel like dark, rich, fluffy soil and have an earthy smell.



### Make it at home

Composting is easy to do at home with a commercially available compost bin or via a DIY pile. Simply mix yard and kitchen scraps to provide the right conditions to encourage decomposition. Then let bacteria and fungi recycle the “waste” into a rich compost humus perfect for gardens.

Yard clippings such as leaves, grass, garden debris and shrubbery have been banned from Michigan landfills since 1995. EGLE regulates and inspects compost sites to ensure composters are protecting the environment and human health.



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# BENEFITS OF COMPOST

## Improves soil quality

When used as a soil amendment, compost can help retain moisture and suppress plant diseases and pests. It can also eliminate the need for chemical or synthetic fertilizers and helps roots penetrate the soil by reducing soil compaction.

## Helps beneficial microorganisms

Fungi and bacteria are unsung heroes in garden soil and spend most of their time converting material into usable nutrients for plants. Compost helps feed the microbial community and can increase earthworm populations.

## Saves landfill space

In the United States food scraps and yard waste make up 30% of what we throw away. Composting is an excellent option for both of these materials.

## Reduces greenhouse gas emissions

When disposed of in landfills, food and yard clippings generate a significant amount of methane. By composting, the generation of greenhouse gases, particularly methane, is avoided.

Learn more about the EGLE Composting Program

[Michigan.gov/EGLEcompost](https://Michigan.gov/EGLEcompost) | 800-662-9278



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