



# Tip Sheet 2: Acceptable Compostable Materials

## WHAT TYPES OF MATERIALS CAN BE ADDED TO YOUR COMPOST BIN

<b>Greens (Nitrogen-Rich)</b>	<b>Browns (Carbon-Rich)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Coffee grounds and paper filters</b></li><li>• <b>Tea bags and loose tea</b></li><li>• <b>Grass clippings (or recycle them by grasscycling)</b></li><li>• <b>Green plants and garden trimmings</b></li><li>• <b>House plants</b></li><li>• <b>Fresh flowers</b></li><li>• <b>Fruit and vegetable peelings</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Bread and grains</b></li><li>• <b>Corncobs*</b></li><li>• <b>Dry plant material</b></li><li>• <b>Eggshells*</b></li><li>• <b>Food-soiled paper towels and napkins</b></li><li>• <b>Leaves, small twigs*, and woody clippings*</b></li><li>• <b>Nut shells</b></li><li>• <b>Pine needles</b></li><li>• <b>Stale beans, flour, and spices</b></li><li>• <b>Straw and hay</b></li></ul>

Browns are dry carbon-rich plant materials, such as breads, grains, dried leaves and twigs, while greens are wet, nitrogen-rich materials such as fruit and vegetable peelings, coffee grounds, tea bags and loose tea, and grass clippings.

Green materials tend to breakdown faster because of both their higher moisture content and stored nitrogen. Brown materials such as \*corncobs, eggshells, small twigs, and woody prunings take a longer time to break down but are essential for the composting process. They add space between your materials to allow for water and air to flow through.

When composting in your backyard, there are certain materials that you should avoid adding to your compost bin to prevent odors and critters. Below is a list of items that can cause issues in your compost pile. **When in doubt, leave it out.**

## WHAT NOT TO COMPOST

- **Bones**
- **Cat and dog waste**
- **Cheese and other dairy products**
- **Fats and oils**
- **Meats and trimmings**



## For More Information

[MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/RecycleRight](https://montgomerycountymd.gov/RecycleRight) | 311 or 240-777-0311



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