



Backyard Composting • Grasscycling

# HOME COMPOSTING *for busy people*

YOUR GUIDE TO  
HOME COMPOSTING

Mulching • Vermicomposting



**CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA  
SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY**  
– your cutting edge resource for cutting waste.

## WHY COMPOST?

Composting is nature's way of recycling your yard waste and food scraps.

- Compost is a soil amendment you can make easily at home.
- Compost places a variety of nutrients into your soil — helping your garden thrive!
- Compost increases water retention, requiring less watering.
- Compost alters soil structure, making your soil easier to work with.

## THE AUTHORITY CAN GET YOU STARTED, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, KEEP YOU GOING!

- Free 90-minute workshops at various locations throughout Central Contra Costa County.
- Discount compost bins.
- Composting hotline with 24-hour response: 925-906-1801 x306.
- Garbage bill reduction.
- Home Composting Facebook page, [facebook.com/CCCSWA](https://facebook.com/CCCSWA).



### Common Techniques:

Backyard Composting

Vermicomposting

Grasscycling

Mulching

# Backyard Composting

water



Your compost pile should always be moist like a wrung-out sponge.



Greens  
(High Nitrogen Content)

aerate



Turn or mix the material in your compost bin at least once every two weeks for one batch of compost per season.



Browns  
(High Carbon Content)

50% greens



50% browns

bugs & bacteria



These critters are the key to composting! With help from fungi, they break down your food scraps and yard waste into compost.

compost



**Never Compost: Meats, Dairy Products, Cat/Dog Feces.**



# Vermicomposting

## WHY COMPOST WITH WORMS?

Worm castings and worm “tea” are high in valuable nutrients and offer many of the same benefits of traditional compost without a lot of the labor or yard space.

## VERMICOMPOSTING IS EASY!

- Build or purchase a worm composting bin.
- Purchase Red Wiggler Worms from a local nursery or worm farm.
- **Feed** your worms 1-2 times per week.
- **Harvest** your worm castings.
- **Drain** your worm tea.
- **Feed, Harvest** and **Drain** as often as needed.

## HARVESTING YOUR WORM CASTINGS.

Worm castings, resembling coffee grounds, will accumulate in your bin. When 3-4 inches deep, it's time to harvest! Mix worm castings into your soil and potted plants. For harvesting techniques, attend a free CCCSWA composting workshop or visit [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org).

## WORM TEA.

A dark fluid, worm “tea” can be drained from the bottom of your bin. Worm tea is full of nutrients and is great for plant root growth. Simply dilute the tea 5:1 with water and spray!



*Feed your worms vegetables, fruits, crushed egg shells, breads and grains, tea bags, non-greasy leftovers, coffee grounds and filters, and soiled pure paper products like napkins and paper towels.*



**Live in an apartment?**

**A worm bin is easy and hardly takes up any space! Your container plants will love you for it.**

**Want to build a worm bin? Visit [wastediversion.org](http://wastediversion.org)**



## Grasscycling

Grasscycling is the simple practice of leaving grass clippings on the lawn when mowing. Once cut, grass clippings first dehydrate, then decompose, quickly disappearing from view.

### Benefits:

- Returns nutrients to the soil beneath the lawn.
- Reduces work because you don't have to rake, bag or dispose of your grass clippings.



## Mulching

A material that is spread over the soil surface providing many garden benefits: retains moisture, reduces weeds, insulates plant roots and prevents erosion.

### Common mulching materials:

- Wood chips.
- Shredded bark.
- Leaves.
- Pine needles/ Redwood needles.
- Dried grass clippings.

8.6 inches



## **Certify as a Home Composter!**

If you receive a garbage bill and are an active home composter within the CCCSWA service area, please visit **wastediversion.org** to certify and receive a monthly credit.

*Thank you for home composting!*



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