



WASTE FACTSHEET

COMPOST IN A BOTTLE

Composting is an easy way to recycle food and garden waste! This experiment will demonstrate the decomposition process and simulate the breakdown of organic matter into compost.

MATERIALS

- Vegetable and fruit peels (soft food scraps are best)
- Shredded newspaper (moisten with water)
- Dry leaves
- Clear plastic soft drink or water bottle
- Soil
- Tape
- Scissors
- Water spray bottle



STEPS

1. Cut around the upper third of the soft drink bottle, leaving it hinged.
2. Fill the bottom two-thirds of the bottle with layers, starting with a layer of soil and then alternating with leaves, vegetable and fruit matter and moist shredded paper.
3. Spray with water.
4. Seal the bottle with tape and place in a sunny position.
5. Mark on the bottle where the top layer finishes.
6. Check the level regularly. Observe and record the decomposing process as the levels drop.
7. You know the compost is fully decomposed when it looks and smells like soil. It can then be used on your garden!



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EXPERIMENT WITH YOUR COMPOST BOTTLE!

Compare the different rates of material decomposition by using the methods below:

- Place compost bottles in different locations eg. one in full sun, partial sun, no sun
- Use different sized bottles
- Try different aeration and moisture schedules
- Place different types of materials in the bottle

Follow the steps below to conduct a complete scientific investigation.



INTRODUCTION - Why are you conducting this experiment and what are your predictions?



METHODOLOGY - How are you going to conduct the experiment?



RESULTS - What did you find out?



DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATION - What changes can be made to address the initial enquiry?

TIPS FOR A HEALTHY MINI-COMPOST

- Keep moist - if compost is too wet, leave open and place in direct sun to dry out slightly, or add more dry materials.
- Keep aerated - open the lid and shake up the bottle once a week to aerate.

