

## Plants for composting, means soil for boasting!

We have delicious fruits and vegetables to eat thanks to nutritious soil where we grow our food. Florida is fortunate to have a long growing season, where we can grow some crops almost all year!

Growing a home garden at home is a relaxing activity that rewards you with a feast of patience. Fortunately, seeds are pretty inexpensive, especially if you buy fruits or vegetables that include them for free! Soil on the other hand can get expensive to have a sizeable garden.

Many of the fertilizers in store-bought soils are loaded with nutrients to grow plants right away, but these often come at an environmental cost, since the phosphorus must be mined out of a quarry. One ton of mined phosphorus-containing rocks yields *five* tons of waste! Is there a better and more environmentally-friendly way to garden?

Composting is something practiced by many home gardeners and even large-scale farms reap the benefits of reusing their old, decaying plant material to fertilize.

You can too with this activity on a small fun-size scale!



### Activity: Making a Compost Jar!

#### Materials:

- 1 glass jar with lid
- 1 scoop of backyard soil
- 1 *small* splash of water
- 1 handful of old fruit and veggie waste pieces (peels, shavings, stems, etc.)
  - You can also use grass clippings and fallen leaves!



#### Directions:

1. Insert dirt, small splash of water, and old fruit and veggie waste into the jar until it is about  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{2}{3}$  full.
2. Shake it up!
  - This helps mix soil microbes onto your fruit and veggie waste pieces!
3. Find a warm, sunny spot in a patio or backyard to leave the jar for a few weeks.

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