

What kind of compound or bin?

The ideal compost bin is:

- easily accessible
- has few gaps in the sides and may be insulated with cardboard, straw, black plastic etc
- has a lid or cover

And is located:

- in a sunny or semi-shaded position
- directly on the soil or turf
- away from water-courses

It is convenient to use and works for you

What kind of compound or bin? & compost heap examples

- Compost compounds or bins can be home-made or purchased, often in kit form.
- They can be made of wood, plastic or wire mesh. Solid metal, unless specifically meant for the purpose, is not good because the moisture from the heap may corrode the metal & adversely affect the compost – toxins.
- Wood should be treated with an environmentally friendly wood preservative product
- There are basically 2 types – static & tumbler

(tumbler types dealt with in fast composters & tumblers)

Static compost bins

- Available from DIY & garden stores/catalogues
- Consider 2 or more smaller units rather than 1 huge one

Plastic

- You can use an old plastic dustbin – cut out the base & turn upside down
- both of the following are available at greatly subsidised prices from your local authority (Glasgow – WISE group/ Zero Waste Scotland)

Compost Converter 220 or “dalek” type

- Made from 100%-recycled black plastic
- Sturdy & simple
- Access hatch at base, lid
- Can be awkward to extract the finished compost

Komp 200 open fronted type

- Made from 100 % recycled polyethylene, which can be recycled again
- UV stable
- Thick and rigid modular panels, manufactured by an injection moulded special foaming process which increases heat retention through insulation as well as balancing the levels of moisture and aeration.
- Design to give maximum aeration
- Easy to assemble
- Easy access to contents

Rodent proof base plates are also usually available.

Wooden

- Can be home made from any untreated wood

- If using pallets, insulate the sides in some way – cardboard, straw, insulation block, wood, black plastic
- A cubic metre is a good size if you have room
- Either go for a 3-closed-sides+1 side slatted, or a beehive construction
- A 3-closed-sides+i-side slatted can also be made using double layer of wire netting or bricks
- New Zealand box type – all wood with slatted front, used in a series of 2 or more modules side by side for easy turning of compost

No bin – just a heap

- A free-standing heap needs to have a base at least 2m X 1m in order to generate and retain sufficient heat
- Aim for a tapering shape with a flat top
- Start by forking over the ground where the heap will stand & make a layer of twiggy material about 20cm deep
- Any unrotted material from a previous heap can be added next, if not then cover the twigs with about a 5cm layer of soil.
- Then add your layers of “greens” and “browns” 50:50
- Try to put mushy, sappy material to the outer edges and firmer material in the centre
- In dry weather the outside layers can dry out, so keep moist by watering from a watering can
- Build the heap up to just over 1m high and flatten off the top
- Cover with old carpet, Hessian sacks or black plastic
- Ideally make in one go as a “hot heap”
- The finished compost is easily dug out from the heap and the unrotted material goes into a new heap.