

# BUILD YOUR OWN

## WIRE MESH COMPOST BIN

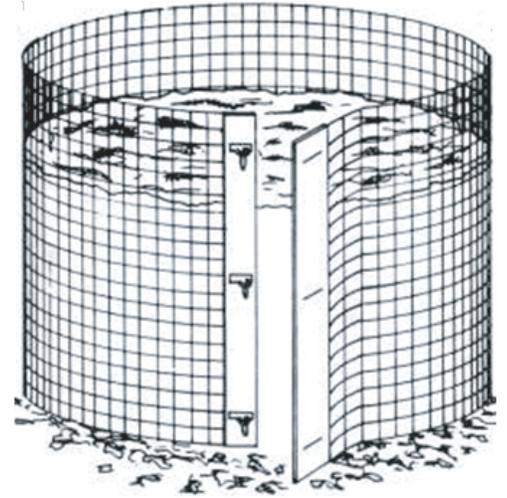
The wire mesh compost bin is an affordable composting solution. It can be constructed for under \$20 and is easy to maintain. To turn the pile, simply unwrap the bin and set it up next to the pile of materials; then fork the materials back in.

### MATERIALS & TOOLS

- > 10-ft length of 1/2-in. hardware cloth (3 to 4 ft tall) **OR** 16-gauge plastic coated wire mesh (for a 3-ft diameter bin)
- > 4 metal or plastic ties **OR** some heavy wire (to twist into ties)
- > Pliers, Wire cutter or tin snips, Work gloves

### BUILDING THE BIN

- 1) Unroll hardware cloth or wire mesh and trim off any excess wire. Trim or bend over ends to fit them flush with the cross wires. This will eliminate loose edges that may poke or scratch hands.
- 2) Bend the hardware cloth or wire mesh into a circle and securely attach ends with the ties or several pieces of heavy wire.



### COMPOSTING IN DRY CLIMATES

To reduce moisture loss in dry climates (like Southern California), line or cover the bin with 6 millimeter black plastic.

- 1) Cut a piece of plastic into an 11 ft x 4 ft rectangle.
- 2) Line or wrap the bin with plastic and fold any excess over the top edge of the bin. Secure with clothespins if necessary.

## WOODEN PALLET COMPOST BIN

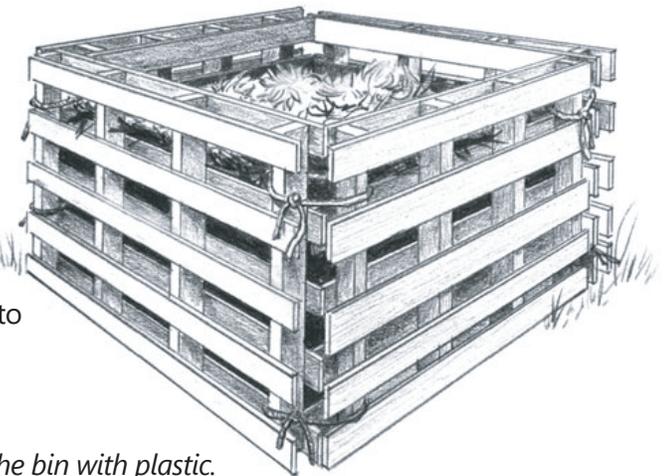
Create an inexpensive bin using wooden pallets. Wooden pallet bins have the added advantage of reusing pallets that would otherwise end up in the landfill. This design includes a removable front, making it easy to turn the compost.

### MATERIALS & TOOLS

- > 4 wooden pallets
- > 32 wood screws or some bailing wire
- > 4 bolt latches

### BUILDING THE BIN

- 1) Assembly is easy; just screw or wire three of the pallets together.
- 2) Attach bolt latches to the front edge of the bin and the last pallet to make a removable door.



### COMPOSTING IN DRY CLIMATES

To reduce moisture loss in dry climates (like Southern California), line the bin with plastic.

- > Staple a sheet of plastic to three sides of the bin and a separate plastic sheet to the front door.

### MULTI-BIN VARIATIONS

Convert a one-bin pallet composter into a two-bin system by adding 2 or 3 pallets. In a two-bin system, the compost is turned by emptying the full bin into the empty one and back again. If you have lots of compostable material, expand your operation to a three-bin system. Build the pile in the first bin, turn it into the second for further decomposition, and turn it into the third for curing.

# BUILD YOUR OWN

## STACKABLE WOODEN COMPOST BIN

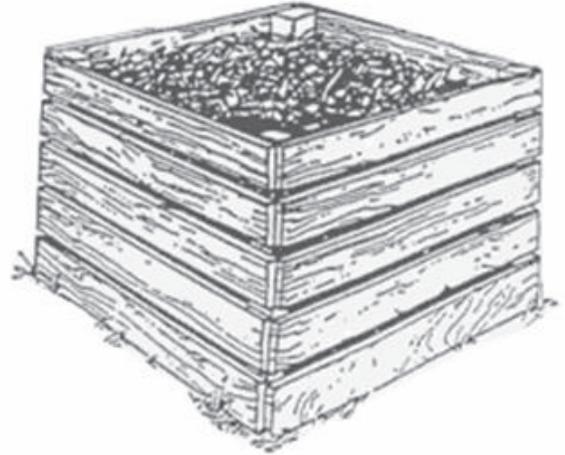
*The stackable wooden compost bin requires minimal carpentry skills to build. The cost depends largely on the quality of materials used (plan on about \$25 - 30, depending on type of lumber).*

*Materials can also be obtained for free by scavenging wood from an old fence; take care not to use "treated" wood. The wooden compost bin consists of several stackable tiers and is designed to make turning the compost pile easy. To turn the pile, remove the uppermost tier and place it on the ground next to the bin. Fork compost into this tier until full; then stack another tier on top. Continue to add material and tiers from the old pile until finished.*

### MATERIALS & TOOLS

*The following materials list is for a stackable, 5-tier bin using 1x8 in. wood fencing boards. (Dimensions can be converted as necessary; Minimum bin size for successful composting is 3 ft x 3 ft x 3 ft.)*

- > For tier planks: twenty 3-ft lengths of 1x8 in. wood fencing board
- > For tier "feet": twenty 7-3/4 inch lengths of 2x2 in. wood lumber (cut two 8-foot lengths into 20 sections)
- > Eighty 1-1/2 in. wood screws



### BUILDING THE BIN

1. Screw the planks to the feet (make sure the feet are offset so that they extend three inches past the bottom of the tier).
2. Each tier should be fastened securely with at least 16 screws.

## GET CREATIVE WITH YOUR MATERIALS!

***Composting can be as easy to start and easy to maintain as you would like it to be!***

Depending on your space, schedule, desired level of involvement, available materials, and imagination, there are composting styles to fit every personality!

### REMEMBER ...

- > For best results, place your bin directly on soil to invite vital decomposer microorganisms into your bin!
- > Your browns (carbon) to greens (nitrogen) ratio should be approximately 50/50 by volume.
- > The greater diversity of compostables you put in, the more nutrient-rich your end product will be!
- > Bury food scraps to keep odors and pests at bay.
- > Relax and have fun!

**There are a great diversity of methods and processes that all produce this wonderful soil amendment!  
Don't be afraid to explore the many options to find a composting style that suits you best!**

QUESTIONS? Call our ROTLINE: (760) 436-7986 ext. 700



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