



# What's accepted

## All food

- Fruits and vegetables
- Meat, fish and bones
- Dairy products
- Eggs and egg shells
- Pasta, beans and rice
- Bread and cereal
- Nuts and shells



**NO:** Grease, oil or gum

## Other compostable household items

- Coffee grounds and filters
- Hair and nail clippings
- Cotton balls and swabs with paper stems
- Houseplants and flowers
- Wooden items such as chopsticks, popsicle sticks and toothpicks



**NO:** Yard waste, diapers or sanitary products, animal and pet waste, litter or bedding, cleaning or baby wipes, Styrofoam, dryer lint or dryer sheets, recyclable items (cartons, glass, metal, paper, plastic)

## Food-soiled paper

- Pizza boxes from delivery
- Napkins and paper towels
- Paper egg cartons



**NO:** Frozen food boxes, microwave popcorn bags, fast food wrappers, ice cream tubs, towels used with cleaning chemicals

## Certified compostable products

- Compostable paper and plastic cups, plates, bowls, utensils and containers



Look for the BPI logo on certified products.

**NO:** Items only labeled as biodegradable, oxo-degradable, earth friendly, made from plants, green, etc.

## Important: only include the right things

Only including acceptable materials is especially important with organics recycling. Find a detailed list of items accepted and not accepted at [minneapolismn.gov/organics](http://minneapolismn.gov/organics). If you are unsure if an item is compostable, contact Solid Waste & Recycling or put the items in the garbage.



## Get labels for your home



Container labels help everyone in your household know which materials to put in the organics recycling, recycling and trash bins. Order the labels pictured at [minneapolismn.gov/organics](http://minneapolismn.gov/organics).

## Right-size your garbage cart



By participating in organics recycling, you may be able to reduce your trash enough to switch to a small garbage cart. This change will save you \$3 per month.

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats, please contact Solid Waste & Recycling at 612-673-2917 or [SWRcustomer@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:SWRcustomer@minneapolismn.gov)

People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-263-6850.

Para asistencia 612-673-2700

Rau kev pab 612-673-2800

Hadii aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500

## City of Minneapolis Divison of Solid Waste & Recycling

2635 University Ave NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55418

612-673-2917  
[minneapolismn.gov/organics](http://minneapolismn.gov/organics)



# Setting up organics recycling at home



Organics are a resource, not a waste! By participating in the organics recycling program, your food scraps and non-recyclable paper products are put to better use by being recycled into compost – a valuable resource used in landscaping and road construction projects.

Figuring out how to get started with collecting organics recycling at home can be a challenge. This guide includes useful tips to help you make the most of the organics recycling program.

## Getting started with organics recycling

### 1. Select an indoor collection container

There are many options for containers you use to collect organics recycling in your home – some you may already have. You can use an ice cream pail, coffee can, or cottage cheese container. You can convert an existing garbage can into an organics container. Or you can purchase a kitchen pail from a grocery, hardware or retail store or order one online.



### 2. Start by collecting food, then add paper and other compostable items



Spoiled food and food scraps are the most common material in the trash, which makes them the most important material to start collecting for organics recycling.

Keep a pail or other small container for collecting organics in a convenient location in your kitchen, such as on your counter or under the sink.

Scrape food prep scraps and leftovers from your plate into your kitchen pail. Place spoiled or stale food from your fridge and cupboards in the pail as well.

Once you are comfortable sorting your food scraps, start collecting napkins, paper towels, and tissues. Certified compostable paper and plastic plates, bowls, cups, containers, utensils, and other products are accepted as well.

### 3. Put your bagged organics in your cart weekly



Organics must be placed in either brown paper bags or BPI-certified compostable plastic bags before being placed in your green organics cart. This helps to prevent a mess in your organics cart. Larger items such as pizza boxes from delivery and paper egg cartons do not need to be bagged.

## A note about compostable bags

Although organics must be bagged when placed into your green cart, you can choose whether to line your indoor collection container with a compostable bag or wait to put organics in a bag right before you bring them out to your cart.



One option to avoid purchasing compostable plastic bags is to keep “wet” organics (such as food scraps) loose in a collection container and “dry” organics (like napkins and paper towels) in a paper bag. When you’re ready to take the organics out to your cart, dump the wet organics on top of the dry organics.

If you are purchasing compostable plastic bags, remember that there are many different brands available. Compostable plastic bags are sold at most grocery, hardware and large retail stores. If you’ve used a bag that didn’t work well for you, try another brand. Remember that the BPI logo must be printed on certified compostable plastic bags.



## More about compostable products

Certified compostable products, including paper and plastic plates, bowls, cups, containers, and utensils, are accepted for organics recycling. Certified compostable products must have the BPI logo on them to be accepted.

Paper items that have a shiny or smooth surface, such as coffee cups, to-go containers, and ice cream tubs, likely have a plastic lining and are not accepted in the organics program unless they are identified as a certified compostable item.

If an item doesn’t have the BPI logo and you’re unsure whether or not it’s compostable, it’s best to put that item in the trash. This will help ensure the organics recycling is clean and free of contamination.



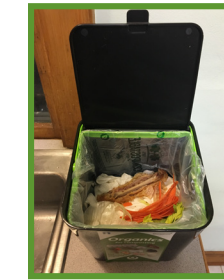
## Tips for collecting organics

### Use a container with a vented lid



Vented containers allow moisture to evaporate, slowing down the decomposition process of the food in your organics recycling container. This will reduce odors and help your compostable plastic bags hold up longer. If you’re purchasing a container, look for one with a vented lid. If you’re making your own, simply poke holes in the lid.

### Remove liquids



Liquids in your organics recycling container can speed up the decomposition of food and weaken compostable bags. To avoid this, be sure to drain excess liquids before placing food scraps in your collection container. You can also place paper towels or newspaper at the bottom of your collection container to absorb liquids.

### Keep your container in the fridge or freezer



Keeping your collection container in the refrigerator or freezer slows down the decomposition process, reduces odors, and prevents pests such as fruit flies. It can also help your compostable bags last longer.

### Collect organics throughout your house



Although we generate the most organics recycling in the kitchen, there are opportunities to collect materials for organics recycling throughout the house. One idea for the bathroom: convert your bathroom trash container to an organics bin and clip a smaller cup to the bin to collect trash. Compostable items like tissues, Q-tips and cotton balls go in the organics compartment, while garbage items like dental floss go in the smaller cup.