

COMPOST TEA LEAVES AND COFFEE GROUNDS TO NOURISH YOUR SOIL

Composting is an easy way to make your garden a little more sustainable! But what is it, exactly? Composting is the process of recycling organic material such as food scraps and yard waste in a way that produces a nutrient-rich soil additive.

It is beneficial for the environment because those organic materials I mentioned above (food scraps and yard waste) make up 1/3 of the garbage we throw away, adding to an ailing landfill system. They not only take up space there but also produce methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Your organic waste might seem like a trivial amount but imagine if everyone did it every week.

A second benefit of composting is that it provides organic matter to your garden. Many gardeners spend a lot of money buying bags of compost, but doing it yourself saves money and likely produces a better end product. Compost in your garden provides better moisture control and oxygen, suppresses plant diseases and pests, and lessens the need for chemicals. Best of all (to me, anyway), compost attracts earthworms.

The Environmental Protection Agency provides simple facts and steps for composting [here](#), and you can find information on making both compost and bins [here](#).

Back to tea. Since this is a nutrition blog, I encourage you to drink green tea for its many health benefits (more on that later). If you use loose-leaf tea, just add the leaves to your compost bin after brewing. If you use tea bags, check to see if they are biodegradable; that is, make sure they are compostable. If they contain polypropylene, they will not compost. You can still add them to your compost bin and take out the bags later if you'd like, or you can streamline the process by opening the little bag and taking out the tea leaves to compost.

It is also fine to add the tea leaves directly to your soil. This is what I do. Just loosen the soil around your plants and dig in the tea leaves, turning over the soil gently. If there is caffeine present, it will not hurt the plants.

Coffee grounds are also great for composting. You can add them to your compost pile or, if you want, just add them directly to your soil. Read more [here](#).

Of course there are many other food scraps you can compost: eggshells, fruit and vegetable scraps (eat the peel whenever possible but toss the core and inedible parts into the compost bin), and nut shells are great. Do not compose bones, dairy or meat products as these will add unpleasant odors and attract unwanted pests.

Just One Thing to do: Save your used tea leaves and coffee grounds, then add them to your compost bin or soil.