



UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory

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104 Items You Can Compost: this is just a start – look around your house, office, local companies, etc. Remember, you can compost all these items, but you don't have to – do your homework and pick the ones that work for you!

From the Kitchen – in addition to fruit and veggies

- *Tip: any round item, like grapes – cut or smash them first to help with the decomposition process*

1.	Coffee Grounds
2.	Coffee Filters – consider using filters that haven't been bleached white
3.	Stale coffee, cold tea ☕
4.	Tea bags and loose tea
5.	Egg Shells – you can dry or crush so they will break down faster 🥚
6.	Used paper napkins
7.	Fruit pits, cores, and seeds – to speed up their decomposition, some people bake them in 350 degrees for 30 minutes, then grind, others will soak them overnight and then put in a blender – you can also try smashing them
8.	Corn cobs – consider chopping them up to speed decomposition 🌽
9.	Pizza boxes, ripped into smaller pieces
10.	Paper bags, either ripped or balled up
11.	The crumbs you sweep off the counters or floors
12.	Pasta – broken or leftover from cooking – with no or little sauce
13.	Rice – with little to no sauce 🍚
14.	Stale or moldy bread, crumbs, crust, etc.
15.	Paper towel rolls
16.	Stale/unwanted crackers
17.	Stale/unwanted cereal
18.	Used paper plates (if they don't have a waxy coating)
19.	Cardboard containers that berries sometimes come in.
20.	Nut shells (except for black walnut shells which can be toxic to plants) 🌰
21.	Unwanted herbs and spices
22.	Stale/unwanted pretzels 🥨
23.	Pizza crusts
24.	Fruit and veggie skins – may want to chop up first 🍌
25.	Fruit and veggie cores – apples, pineapple, etc., cut into smaller pieces
26.	Cereal boxes made from recycled materials with earth-friendly inks (tear them into small pieces)

27.	Wine corks made from natural materials
28.	Mold cut off cheese – small amount 🧀
29.	Old jelly, jam, or preserves
30.	Flat soda
31.	Stale beer and wine 🍷
32.	Hops
33.	Leftover juice and juice drinks, pomace
34.	Paper egg cartons – tear into pieces
35.	Toothpicks
36.	Bamboo skewers
37.	Paper cupcakes or muffin cups
38.	Shells – lobsters, shrimp, etc. 🦞
39.	Liquid from canned fruits and veggies
40.	Liquids from cooking fruits and veggies, pasta
41.	Aluminum foil – small amount in small pieces
42.	Soy and nut milks

From the Bathroom – consider cosmetics, chemical (ex: hair dye) that might be on items first

43.	Used facial tissues
44.	Hair from your hairbrush
45.	Toilet paper rolls 🧻
46.	Old loofahs
47.	Nail clippings
48.	Worn out cotton towels and facecloths – cut up
49.	100% cotton balls
50.	Cotton swabs made from 100% cotton and cardboard (not plastics) sticks
51.	Pure soap scraps 🧼

Personal Items

52.	Cardboard tampons applicators
53.	Tobacco products in small amounts 🚬

From the Laundry Room

54.	Dryer lint if from predominantly natural fibers
55.	Old/stained cottons/wool/linen/silk/ clothing – rip or cut it into smaller pieces
56.	Old leather – it will take a while to break down – cut it, punch holes in it, etc.
57.	Bone and wooden buttons and toggles
58.	Shoes laces – cotton and leather – may have to snip off the plastic ends
59.	Old fur collars etc. – remove the cloth lining

From the Office – consider dyes and waxy coatings

60.	Bills and other documents you've shredded
61.	Envelopes (minus the plastic window) ✉
62.	Pencil shavings ✎
63.	Sticky notes
64.	Business cards (if they're not glossy)
65.	Index cards
66.	Thin cardboard boxes like from printer ink

Around the House

67.	Contents of your vacuum cleaner bag or canister
68.	Newspaper (shredded or torn into smaller pieces) 📰
69.	Subscription cards from magazines
70.	Leaves trimmed from house plants 🌿
71.	Dead house plants and their soil, including coconut coir 🌱
72.	Flowers from floral arrangements 🌸
73.	Natural potpourri
74.	Used matches
75.	Ashes from the fireplace or outdoor firepits – consider the source, use in very small amounts better to apply to gardens
76.	Non-corrugated cardboard (check for glue)
77.	Candles – soy 🕯
78.	Natural fiber stuffed animals – check the covering and the stuffing, cut up
79.	Dead insects 🐛
80.	Seaweed and kelp from that trip to the beach

Party and Holiday Supplies

81.	Wrapping paper rolls
82.	Paper table cloths
83.	Crepe paper streamers
84.	Latex balloons 🎈
85.	Raffia
86.	Excelsior
87.	Jack o' Lanterns, gourds 🎃
88.	Natural holiday wreaths, garland, trees (may need to chop up first)

Pet-Related

89.	Fur from animal brushes and combs
90.	Manure from herbivores – horse, cows, etc.
91.	Droppings and bedding from your rabbit/gerbil/hamsters, etc. 🐹
92.	Newspaper/droppings from the bottom of the bird cage
93.	Feathers
94.	Leftover or spoiled alfalfa hay or pellets (usually fed to rabbits or guinea pigs)
95.	Rawhide dog chews 🦷
96.	Fish food
97.	Dry dog or cat food
98.	Your child's goldfish- better than throwing them down the toilet!

Craft Room/ Workshop/ Man Cave

99.	Natural string
100.	Natural yarn 🧶
101.	Natural "extra thread" package from that old shirt or sweater
102.	Elmer's Glue
103.	Masking tape
104.	Soy crayons 🖍

Ask questions, talk to other folks to see what works for them – keep adding to the list!

By UConn Master Gardener & Master Composter, Tracy Burrell, updated 2019