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When Will Your Compost be Ready

Patience is needed when you compost. It can take anywhere from one month to one year

for your first batch of humus to be ready to use. It will depend on the size of your bin, if

you are using cold or hot composting, what you are putting into the compost and the

weather. Another factor to consider is what you will be using the finished product for.

Different uses can utilize the compost at different stages of the process.

The longer a compost is allowed to decompose the finer, darker, and richer it becomes.

But you do not have to wait until it reaches this state to use it. If you want to use the

compost as mulch for your flower beds or other areas of your garden you can use it when

it is still in a chunkier state. The mulch is used to keep an even temperature for the soil

and discourage weed growth.

If you are going to be using the mature compost to add to your planting pots, the compost

should be at the last stages of the process. Things to look for to know that your compost

is ready are:

- * The amount of material that is in your bin is reduced to approximately half of the original contents.

- * When you look at the finished material, you can not tell what it used to be – no parts are recognizable.

- * The pile will no longer be as hot (if using the hot composting method)

- * The compost is dark in color and looks very much like a rich top soil

In order to have a steady supply of mature compost it is recommended to have a two-bin

system going. Once your first container is full, you can continue to compost with the

second bin until you can use the material from the first.

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