



Tips for rodent-free compost



Composting is a great way to enrich the soil in your garden, and reduce amount the food waste put into landfills. However, unless precautions are taken, compost can provide the perfect warm and safe location for local rats and mice to find food and shelter. If you're already an avid composter, or are planning on starting soon, be sure to follow this guide to be sure that there aren't and unwelcome visitors who also benefit from your efforts.

- Use an enclosed compost bin with a tight-fitting lid to keep rodents from accessing the composting.
- Consider using a composting tumbler that is raised off the ground, which will prevent burrowing under and into the compost.
- If your compost bin sits on the ground and has an open bottom, place a hard material like wood or stone, or a steel wire mesh with holes that are $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch small or smaller under the compost pile and bin to prevent rodents from burrowing under and into the compost.
- Do not compost any cooked food, meat, dairy, or grease, as these items give off a strong odor and will attract pests.
- Bury new food additions deep within the compost pile.
- Keep compost pile moist and be sure to stir it often in order to prevent burrowing, especially in the fall as rodents begin looking for a safe, warm place to hide.
- Place the compost pile in an open area, away from sheds, fences, or other structures in order to discourage burrowing and make it easier to notice if any has occurred.