

# HOW DO I USE COMPOST?

Compost is always added to your existing soil! If you plant only into compost and no soil, your plants will not be happy. That would be too much organic matter and not enough sand, silt, or clay. The easiest methods to use compost are called “topdressing” and “side dressing” which means to spread an even layer of compost directly on top of the soil and around the side of your plants. No digging in necessary!

## FRUIT TREES

- Rake back mulch
- Apply 2 inches of compost on top of soil, under the entire area of the canopy, annually
- Rake mulch back over compost
- Don't let compost or mulch pile up on the trunk of the tree, give it a couple inches of space
- Immediately irrigate or hand water

## EXISTING VEGETABLE BEDS (IN THE GROUND OR RAISED BEDS)

- Apply 1 inch of compost on top of soil around existing veggies, annually  
OR
- Apply ½ inch of compost on top of soil when beds are empty in fall and again in spring
  - Use a garden fork to gently lift soil, do not till or mix compost into soil
- Immediately irrigate or hand water

## NEW VEGETABLE BEDS OR BARE SOIL (NEVER BEEN PLANTED INTO BEFORE)

- Apply 2-4 inches of compost on top of soil, one time
- Use a shovel or garden fork to dig in and mix top 6-8 inches of soil with compost
- Immediately irrigate or hand water

## LANDSCAPING PERENNIALS AND NATIVE PLANTS

- Rake back mulch
- Apply 1 inch of compost on top of soil, annually
- Rake mulch back over compost
- Immediately irrigate or hand water

## CONTAINER OR POTTED PLANTS

- For new pots, combine and mix 5 parts potting soil with 1 part compost
- For existing potted plants, add ½ inch of compost in fall and again in spring
- Immediately irrigate or hand water

## LAWN OR GRASS

- Apply ¼ inch of compost on top of grass in fall and spring
- Use the non-toothed side of a rake to help spread it out and work its way into grass
- Immediately irrigate or hand water

