

So David Rosemary

Thought I'd get down some thoughts at random on compost making,

Firstly everything biodegradable will rot & become earth eventually — your job is to speed up the process.

How?

Most people tend to think of the ingredients; so much grass, so many bits of apple, bananas skins, orange peel etc etc

Why not?

Ingredients are very important and I've seen many a good amount of soil produced by someone just bunging their trash bucket every week in the compost bin at the bottom of their garden,

But it was a bit hit or miss because <sup>2</sup> they'd suddenly tip a pile of vacuum cleaner dust, followed by a pile of leaves, then a vast quantity of orange peel. And so on, in clumps & lumps.  
How much better if

① they'd mixed it all up so it didn't settle in layers

but even better if they ALSO MADE EVERYTHING SMALLER

That's my secret, I chop everything up. A banana for instance is your best compost friend - it degrades quickly and therefore (like grass) with help it is ~~neighbours~~ neighbours get on with it. If you chop up a banana skin it will rot for you, in truth everything biodegradable will (except twigs, old rose stems; seriously leave these out).

As the above is pretty obvious, but like many obvious things



rarely gets heeded. }

Another thing. Leaves make a superb leaf mould which is excellent as a mulch with Any plant (I'm sticking my neck out just a teeny bit because for a start nothing is more NATURAL than leaf mould anyway.) It's called acidic because it's lime-free, so it's really an excellent thing to mulch and dig in to the topsoil to give it a boost. Camellias, rhododendrons LOVE leaf mould. Get a sack and pile it with ten leaves; fill it like you'd fill a pot with soil - dense, push the leaves down tight, give them a few chopped banana skins mixed in, maybe a few handfuls of grass but 95% + LEAVES + a little water - compost of any kind likes to be gently moist; never sopping wet.

Tit up the top of the sack and pierce the sack with a few holes, all the way round to

allow it to breathe — and then  
chuck it behind a shed and forget  
about it for a year.

A few leaves dropped up a bit  
can go in your compost bin OK, just  
mix them up with other things. Like  
newspaper torn up into small bits, just  
remember how paper absorbs water —  
make that work for you.

Above all — don't be in a  
hurry. Sooner or later you should  
notice hundreds of very small pink  
worms. (I believe they're called BRINDLING  
or TIGER worms). Anyway they are  
the indisputable sign that you're  
DOING IT RIGHT

Some people throw in  
a handful of these worms, to get  
things started, so to speak. (They  
procreate at a rate of knots warming up  
your heap and regurgitating it).

I can always supply some.

Meanwhile GOOD luck

And the rest is up to you