



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

What is a brown bin?

A brown bin is for the collection of all your household food waste. The contents of the brown bin are taken by your waste collector to a composting facility, where it is used to produce a high quality compost.

Many waste collectors are providing householders with two containers – a kitchen caddy to keep indoors for your convenience and a larger bin to keep outdoors.

The kitchen caddy is a small lidded bin for your kitchen to collect food waste. When the caddy is full, you can empty it into the larger brown bin (usually 20 litres or 120 litres in size), which you keep outdoors.

You may be provided with one of these bin types, or both.

Why do I need a brown bin?

A brown bin is provided to ensure waste food is collected separately so that it can be used to make high quality compost for use as a soil improver in agriculture and horticulture.

Also in Ireland, there are new Brown Bin Regulations¹, which now make it law that householders have to either use a brown bin, bring food waste to a local recycling centre or compost at home.

Food waste can no longer be placed in the general waste bin.

Can I put raw or cooked meat in my brown bin?

Yes. Any type of food waste can be placed in your brown bin. See Question “What can I put in my brown bin?” for a full list of materials.

Will the bin and caddy smell?

No, if you empty your kitchen caddy regularly into the outside brown bin. The outside brown bin is collected every two weeks by waste collectors.

We recommend lining your caddy with newspaper to stop the food sticking and to absorb any excess liquids. If you prefer, you could purchase compostable bags instead of using newspaper. We would also advise rinsing your bin and caddy occasionally with warm water. These basic housekeeping measures should ensure that your bin and caddy do not smell.

Will there be maggots / flies in my brown bin?

As long as you keep your food waste covered e.g. wrapped in newspaper or in a compostable bag flies/maggots will not be a problem. Remember to put your brown bin out for collection every two weeks and wash your bin regularly with hot water.

¹ European Union (Household Food Waste and Bio -Waste) Regulations 2013



What food waste can I recycle?

You can put any of the following materials into your brown bin:

- ✓ Raw or cooked food
- ✓ Meat, poultry & fish, including bones
- ✓ Leftover food from your plates and dishes
- ✓ Fruit & vegetables
- ✓ Tea bags, coffee grinds & paper filters
- ✓ Breads, cakes & biscuits
- ✓ Rice, pasta & cereals
- ✓ Dairy products (cheese, butter, yoghurt)
- ✓ Soups & sauces
- ✓ Eggs, egg shells & cardboard egg boxes
- ✓ Food soiled paper napkins, paper towels
- ✓ Newspaper (when used for wrapping food waste)
- ✓ Out of date food with packaging removed (no glass/plastic)

Grass clippings and small twigs can also be added to your large brown bin.

NO THANKS!

Please DO NOT put any of the following materials into your brown bin

- ✗ Plastic bags/bottles
- ✗ Packaging of any sort
- ✗ Nappies
- ✗ Glass
- ✗ Stones/soil
- ✗ Metal cans/wire
- ✗ Cardboard
- ✗ Ashes, coal or cinders
- ✗ Pet faeces or litter
- ✗ Cooking oils



IF IN DOUBT PHONE AND FIND OUT
contact your waste collection company

I already compost food waste at home, can I still do this?

Yes. Your home composting bin can still be used for uncooked vegetables and fruit peelings. However you cannot place raw meat/cooked meats into your home composter.

You can use your brown bin for all types of food waste, including raw/cooked foods or meats.

But remember, you cannot place food waste into your general waste bin.

What happens to your food waste?

When the waste collector empties your brown bin the contents are taken to a dedicated composting plant where it is specially treated and turned into high quality compost that can be used on gardens, in landscaping projects and on fields.

Can I use plastic bin bags in my brown bin?

No. Plastic bags are made from petrochemical plastics that do not break down during composting but contaminate it. Please remember that if plastic is found in your brown bin, your bin will not be emptied and a contamination tag will be placed on your bin to inform you of this.

However you **can use compostable bags**, or, **newspaper**. The newspaper will absorb any liquid and is completely compostable. If you would prefer to use compostable bags, please use bags which are 100% compostable and show the compostable logo (EN 13432) shown below.



Where can I get compostable bags?

You can purchase compostable bags from your local supermarket. These are identified by a seedling logo and the word 'compostable'.



What is a kitchen caddy?

A kitchen caddy is a small lidded bin that you can put on the table top, work surface, beside your normal kitchen bin or under the sink. It is used to collect small quantities of food waste such as vegetable and fruit peelings, bones, teabags and so on. Your waste collector may provide you with one of these or you may choose to purchase one yourself.

The waste collector has placed a tag on my brown bin saying its contaminated. What do I do?

Your waste collector checks each brown bin before he empties it into the collection truck. If he finds anything in your bin that cannot be composted, such as plastic, he cannot empty it and will attach a tag to the bin telling you it was contaminated. If this occurs, you are advised to check the contents of your bin and remove any contamination. You can then present your bin for the next collection as usual.

Will the brown bin cost me more money?

The new brown bin system should not cost more money if waste is segregated correctly. Under By-laws and National Waste Policy, your waste collector must encourage recycling by offering a lesser charge for collecting your brown bin than your general waste bin.

The most expensive waste stream of all is general waste (landfill waste). There is a Government levy on waste going to landfill therefore, by putting food waste into your brown bin instead, you avoid this levy and save money.

Why should I use a brown bin?

It saves money because you become more aware of the food you waste. The average family wastes €50 per month on discarded food. See www.stopfoodwaste.ie for tips to reduce food waste and is cheaper to use than your waste bin.

It's better for the environment because you are avoiding sending food waste to a landfill where it produces harmful greenhouse gases.

It produces a high quality compost.

Recycling food waste is the Law. Failure to use the brown bin may result in a fine being issued to you by your local authority.

Why has the brown bin to be collected fortnightly? If it's not full can I wait?

It is a requirement under law (Household Food Waste Regulations 2013) that a collector provides a fortnightly collection service.

This is to ensure food waste is collected regularly and often so there are no odour issues for the householder and also to produce the best possible product after treatment at a composting facility giving the best environmental outcome for everyone.