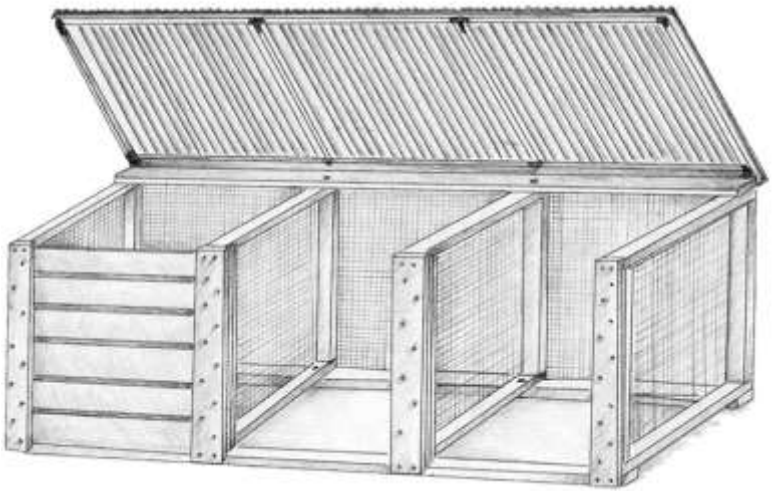
3-Bin Compost System
Wood and Wire



This system is excellent for composting large amounts of yard materials in a brief period of time.

Yard materials can either be stored until there is enough to fill an entire bin or added as available. Materials should be chopped or bruised, moistened and mixed to ensure a hot compost.

A pile made with a balance by volume of 50% fresh greens and 50% dried, brown or woody materials and turned every seven to fourteen days can be ready to use in three to six weeks. Aged compost is more beneficial as a soil amendment, but aging will add 3-6 weeks to the compost process. The texture of the finished compost depends on the materials composted.

This unit can be built for approximately $300-375. Construction requires basic carpentry skills and tools. Do not use treated wood or treat the finished 3-bin with wood preservatives or paint of any kind. If you can afford the extra expense, using cedar for all bin parts will extend the life of the bin.

For additional composting information consult the "Composting at Home" booklet available through the Garden Hotline at (206) 633-0224, help@gardenhotline.org or the web addresses listed on the back of this sheet.

Materials*

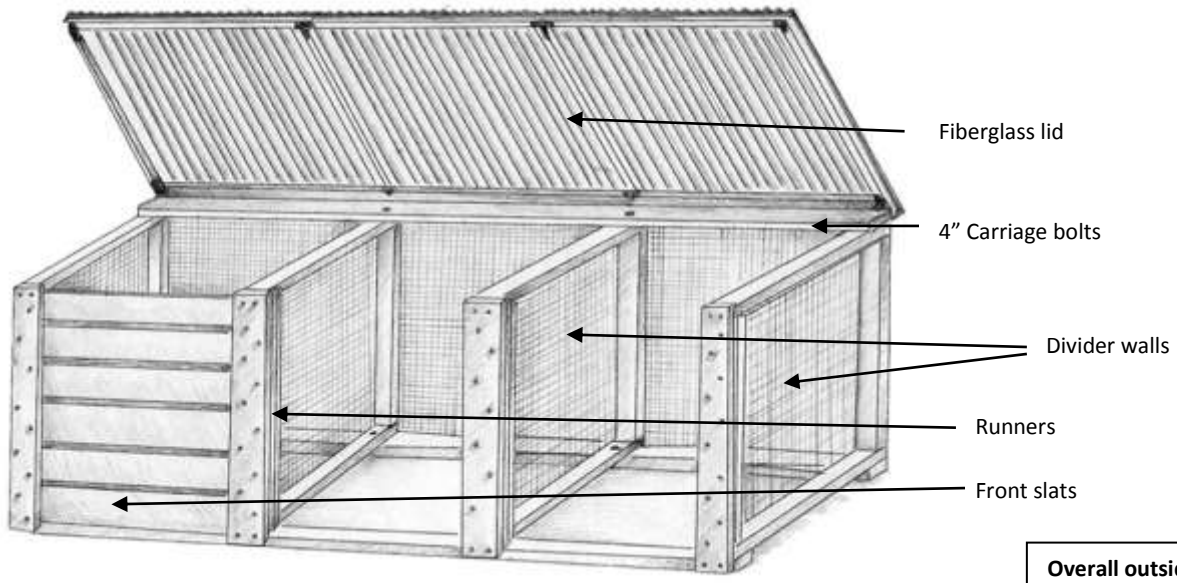
2	18' wood 2"x4"s
4	12' length of wood 2"x4" (or eight 6' lengths)
1	9' length of wood, 2"x2"
2	6' length of wood, 2"x2"
1	16' length of wood, 2"x6"
9	6' length of wood, 1"x6"
22	36" pieces of 1/2" hardware cloth
12	1/2" carriage bolts 4" long
12	washers with 12 nuts for bolts
3	lbs. of 16d galvanized nails
½	lb. of 8d galvanized casement nails
250	poultry wire staples or power stapler
1	12' sheet 4 oz. clear corrugated fiberglass
1	8' sheet of 4 oz. clear corrugated fiberglass
3	8' lengths of wiggle molding
40	gasketed aluminum nails for corrugated fiberglass roofing
2	3" zinc plated hinges for lid
8	flat 4 corner braces with screws
4	flat 3" T-braces with screws

Tools

Hand saw or circular power saw
Drill with 1/2" and 1/8" bits
Screwdriver
Hammer or power stapler with 1" long Galvanized staples
Tin snips
Tape measure
Pencil
1/4" socket or open-ended wrench
Carpenter's square
Safety glasses
Ear protection

* Note about FSC certification: Wood products that have the FSC logo give "the consumer a guarantee that the product has come from a forest which has been evaluated and certified as being managed according to agreed social, economical and environmental standards."

The Garden Hotline is managed by Tilth Alliance and sponsored by Seattle Public Utilities, the Local Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County, and the Saving Water Partnership. Revised 1/2014.



Overall outside dimension
9' wide x 36" deep x 32" high
Each bin section
35 1/8" wide x 36" deep x 32" wide

Construction Details

Build Dividers. Cut two 31 1/2" and two 36" pieces from each 12' 2"x4". Butt end nail the four pieces into a 35"x36" section. Check to make sure each divider section is square. Repeat for other three sections. Cut four 37" long sections of hardware cloth; bend back edges 1". Stretch hardware cloth across each frame. Check for squareness of the frame and staple screen tightly into place every 4" around the edge.


Butt end nail

Set up Dividers. Set up dividers parallel to one another 3' apart. Measure and mark centers for the two inside dividers. Cut four 9' pieces out of the two 18' 2" x4" boards. Place two 9' base boards on top of dividers and measure the positions for the two inside dividers. Mark a center line for each divider on the 9' 2"x4". With each divider, line up the center lines and make the baseboard flush against the outer edge of the divider. Drill a 1/2" hole through each junction centered 1" in from the inside edge. Secure baseboards with carriage bolts, but do not tighten yet. Turn the unit right side up and repeat the process for the top 9' board. Using the carpenter's square or measuring between opposing corners, make sure the bin is square and tighten all bolts securely. Fasten a 9' long piece of hardware cloth securely to the backside of the bin with staples every 4" around the frame.

Front Slats and Runners. Cut four 36" long 2"x6"s for front slat runners. Cut lengthwise two of these boards to 4 3/4" wide and nail them securely to the front of the outside dividers and baseboard, making them flush on top and outside edges. Save remainder of rip cut boards for use as back runners. Center the remaining full width boards on the front of the inside dividers flush with the top edge and nail securely. To create back runners, cut the remaining 2"x6" into a 34" long piece and then rip cut into 4 equal pieces, 1 1/4"x2". Nail the back runner parallel to front runners on side of divider leaving a 1" gap for slats. Cut all the 1x6" cedar boards in to slats 31 1/4" long.

Fiberglass Lid. Use the last 9'2"x4" for the back of the lid. Cut four 32 1/2" 2" x2" and one 9' 2" x2". Lay them into position on the ground as illustrated above and make sure they are square. Screw in corner braces and T-braces on bottom side of the frame. Center lid frame, brace side down on bin structure and attach with hinges. Cut wiggle board to fit the front and back 9' section of the lid frame. Pre-drill wiggle board with 1/8" drill bit and nail with 8d casement nails. Cut fiberglass to fit flush with front and back edges. Overlay pieces at least one channel wide. Pre-drill fiberglass and wiggle board for each nail hole. Nail on top of every third hump with gasket nails.

Seattle Public Utilities

Learn More About Natural Yard Care

Contact the Garden Hotline with your garden questions!
We can send you booklets
"Composting at Home" or "Building Healthy Soil."
help@gardenhotline.org (206) 633-0224 gardenhotline.org

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