

# How to Make Compost Tea

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## What you need:

- 5-gallon bucket
- Un-chlorinated water
- 1 cup of compost and/or worm castings
- Basic Recipe: ¼ cup of food (unsulphured molasses, humic acid, fish emulsion, liquid kelp – an ounce of each)
- Compost tea bag or a panty hose stocking
- Air pump (like from an aquarium store)

## How to Brew Your Compost Tea

- Pretreat your compost to increase its inoculant and fungal power. Take your compost inoculant and add some **humic acid** or **fish emulsion** to it. Put it into a shallow tray and mix it up well. Then let it sit for two to three days. This encourages fresh microorganism growth in the tea. You can treat this as an optional step or you can see it as a way to increase the effectiveness of your brew.
- Fill a bucket with **non-chlorinated** water. The water temperature is ideally between 55-80oF. If using tap water, leave it sitting and uncovered for 24 hours to off-gas any chlorine, or add humic acid to it to deal with chloramine.
- Put the pump **air stone** (from an aquarium store) in the bottom of the bucket, attach the air pump and let it start to bubble. Make sure there is enough oxygen and agitation moving through your liquid. Remember, you are looking for more of a churning or rolling boil, not simply fine bubbles.
- Put compost in the panty hose stocking or mesh bag, tie off the end and suspend it in the water.
- If you want to increase the diversity of your compost tea, we suggest adding a cup or two of garden soil. Better yet, if your compost tea recipe calls for fungal compost, include a cup or two of soil from a nearby forest. By adding these additional soils, you're ensuring your tea is inoculated with a wide range of soil microbes. These soils are like a biological catalyst, or compost tea activator.
- Add the food.
- Let the whole brew **bubble for 24 hours** and for no longer than 36 hours. After 36 hours, if the tea received insufficient oxygen or too much food, anaerobic organisms will overcome the beneficial aerobic organisms. It will be obvious if the tea went anaerobic, because it will stink!

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## Other Recipes:

### **Balanced Compost Tea Recipe**

- 1.5 pounds of balanced compost (equal parts bacterial to fungal biomass)
- 1.6 ounces of humic acids
- 1 ounce of liquid kelp\*
- 1 ounce of soluble unsulphured black-strap molasses

### **Bacterial-Dominated Compost Tea Recipe**

- 1.5 pounds of bacterial-dominated compost (vermicastings work well)
- 2 ounces of cane sugar
- 1 ounce of soluble kelp

### **Fungal-Dominated Compost Tea Recipe**

- 2 pounds of fungal-dominated compost
- 2 ounces humic acids
- 2 teaspoons of yucca extract\*
- 1 ounce of liquid kelp
- 2 tablespoons of ground oatmeal