

# Green Cone System



## Welcome to the Green Cone System, a user-friendly way to compost food scraps

### Why use Green Cones?

Because they are the simplest way to keep food scraps out of the garbage, conserve resources and improve your garden soil.

### Why use two Green Cones?

We recommend two Green Cones for continuous, year-round food scrap composting. After the first Green Cone is filled start using the second Cone. By the time the second Cone is full, the first Cone is ready to be harvested. With two Green Cones you can be harvesting the food scrap compost at the ideal stage, and deal less with having to stop composting until the Cone is emptied and with odors of uncomposted food scraps.

### Are there any reasons not to use Green Cones?

Yes! If you have standing water in your yard in winter or water fills the hole after you dig in your garden, or if you have a very clay soil, Green Cones will not function well. If rats are a big problem in your neighborhood, you will have to take added precautions to keep them away from your Green Cones.

## What's the best place to put Green Cones?

- Convenience is important. Place your Green Cone System where you won't mind walking to it—near a door to the kitchen is a great location.
- Don't put your Cones next to windows or doors that are open in summer—fruit flies might be a nuisance.
- A central area of the garden is good, away from fences, woodpiles and bushes if possible.

## How to install a Green Cone System

### Step 1: Dig a hole

Photo 1: Dig a hole 18 inches deep and the diameter of the black basket. Make sure the hole is deep enough for the basket to be completely underground.

If you have a heavy clay soil, dig down an additional eight inches. Fill this area with drainage material like sand, gravel, rocks from your garden, or broken terracotta pots.



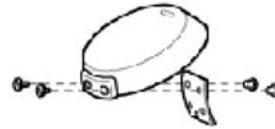
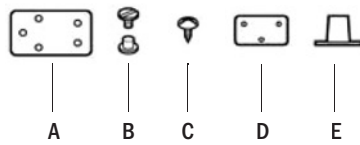
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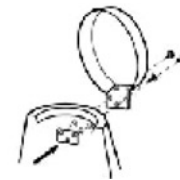
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For more information on composting please call the Natural Lawn & Garden Hotline at 206.633.0224 or email them at: [info@lawnandgardenhotline.org](mailto:info@lawnandgardenhotline.org)

## Parts identification



Assembling the lid and hinge



Attaching the lid

### Step 2: Attach the lid

Photo 2: Use the two rivets (part B) to attach the lid to the flexible rubber rectangle (part A), which will become the lid hinge.



Photo 3: Attach the lid to the outer Cone without the black liner in place. Use three screws (part C) to attach the lid hinge (part A) to the outer Cone. There may be a small rectangular piece of ridged plastic (part D), which can be used inside the outer Cone as reinforcement. The screws are sharp and self-drilling.



### Step 3: Attach the lock

Photo 4: Attach the lock (part E) to top of the outer Cone in the indentation with two screws (part C).



### Step 4: Assemble the Cone

Photo 5: After the lid is attached to the outer Cone, insert the black liner inside the outer Cone.



Photo 6: Set the outer Cone and liner on top of the black basket. Attach the Cone and liner to the basket using screws (part C). The screws are self-drilling and with a little pressure, will drill their own holes through the plastic. Use six screws to attach the basket to the outer Cone and liner.

You now have an assembled Green Cone.



### Step 5: Bury your Green Cone

Photo 7: Place the assembled Green Cone in the hole. Make sure the black basket rim is even with the top surface of the soil.



*The black basket should not be visible after the soil is filled into the hole. Adjust the depth of your hole now if needed.*

Photo 8: Fill in the hole with soil, packing the soil firmly around the black basket. It is ideal for the rim of the outer Cone to be even with the soil, with no black basket showing.



*It is important to check the area around your Green*

*Cone for soil settling during the first few weeks after installation and particularly after hard rain in the winter months. If the soil has settled exposing the black basket, add additional soil to completely cover the black basket and compact it around the Green Cone.*

For rodent prevention it is *essential* for the black basket to remain covered with compacted soil *at all times*. It may be helpful to put bricks, concrete pavers, broken concrete, or large rocks around the Green Cone to harden the surface, discouraging digging near the Green Cone.

### Please note:

If the bar across the top of the Green Cone is in the way of food additions, you may remove it without damaging the Green Cone function. Using a hacksaw or small pruning saw, carefully saw through the ends of the bar (where it joins the top edge of the Cone), remove the bar and sand any sharp plastic edges with sandpaper.



## Using your Green Cone System

### Adding food to your Green Cone

It's simple! Just open the lid and drop your leftover fruits, vegetables, eggshells, breads, grains, pasta, rice, coffee grounds, tea bags, paper napkins, and paper towels into the Green Cone. Then close and lock the lid.

DO NOT add meat, fish or seafood products, poultry, dairy products, oils, or bones to your Green Cone.

### Factors influencing Green Cone harvesting

Given time, your Green Cone will contain dark, moist compost. Typically, a Green Cone used by two people will need to be harvested after about 6 to 12 months. The longer you wait before harvesting, the dryer and more fully composted the food scraps will be. Spring and Fall are the best seasons for harvesting your compost.

Many factors influence the length of time it takes for food scraps to become compost including:

- *Amount and type of food scraps.* For example, orange peels are slower to compost than lettuce leaves.
- *How many food scraps you generate.* More people in a household usually means more food scraps. Vegetarian or vegan households will generate more food scraps.
- *Type of soil.* Clay soil drains poorly, and slows the composting process.

- *Number of bacteria and worms your soil contains.* More bacteria and worms mean faster composting. However, it is not necessary to add soil or worms to your Green Cone.
- *Time of year.* Compost happens faster in warmer weather.

## Green Cone maintenance

Monitor the area around your Green Cone for signs of digging or tunneling. Squirrels like to dig in freshly turned soil, and sometimes raccoons, opossums or rats may follow their lead. If you see signs of digging, immediately fill in holes with rocks and compacted soil and then harden the area close to the Green Cone with bricks, concrete pavers, broken concrete, or large rocks.

If odors or fruit flies become a problem, try adding a thin layer of saw dust, wood shavings or dried grass on top of each food scrap addition. Always keep the lid closed and locked.

### Harvesting using one Green Cone

If you are using ONE Green Cone, you need to harvest when the food scraps consistently rise up into basket area and fill about one-third of the Cone section. This usually takes about 6 to 9 months of regular use. When harvesting, the compost will be very moist, almost like a compost slurry.

- Dig a trench or hole in your yard or garden where you will bury the compost.
- Unscrew the Cone section from the basket.
- Shovel the compost out of the basket and into the trench or hole. Mix the compost with soil and leaves or wood shavings if you have them. Some of the food scraps on top may not be fully composted and therefore will be smelly. Don't worry. Just place all the compost and food scraps in the trench.
- Cover the compost and food scraps with at least 8 inches of compacted soil. Lay a board or pavers over the area and monitor the burial site for two weeks for signs of digging.
- The compost can be left in place to nourish the soil or you can dig the compost up in a month or so for other garden use.
- Replace the Cone on the basket and secure with screws.
- Start using the Green Cone again.

### Harvesting using two Green Cones

Photo 9: Using TWO Green Cones makes composting even easier because you can wait until the food has *fully* composted before harvesting. It will take 6-9 months of regular use before you switch to your alternate Cone. When harvesting, the compost will be dryer and the consistency of coffee grounds.

- Use the first Green Cone until the Cone section is about two-thirds full.
- Switch to using the second Green Cone and let the first one sit idle to let the food scraps fully compost and settle into the underground basket.
- By the time the food in the second Green Cone is two-thirds up into the Cone section, the compost in the first Green Cone should be ready for harvesting.
- To harvest, unscrew the Cone section from the basket and shovel the compost out. Use the compost directly in your garden as a soil amendment, mulch or top dressing.
- Replace the Cone on the basket and secure with screws.
- Let your second Green Cone finish composting while you fill your first Green Cone again.
- When the first Green Cone is two-thirds full, harvest the second Green Cone and repeat the process.

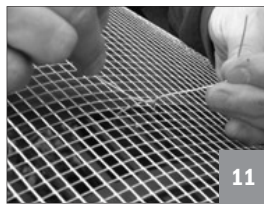


# Pest prevention tips

## Pest proof your Green Cone

Purchase a 2 ft x 6 ft piece of ¼ inch, 23 to 18 gauge hardware cloth and a small roll of thin wire at your local hardware or lumber store. A pair of tin snips and gloves will also be needed.

- Separate the black basket from the outer cone and liner.
- Turn the black basket upside down.
- Photo 10: Wrap the hardware cloth around the basket, forming a cylinder.
- Photo 11: Lace the hardware cloth tightly to the basket near the lip, weaving the wire through the holes in the hardware cloth and basket openings.
- Photo 12: With basket upside down, use the tin snips to cut 4 slits in the hardware cloth vertically down to within 6 inches of the (upside-down) basket's lip.
- Photo 13: Bend the four panels snugly against the basket's sides and lace the overlapping edges together through the basket's openings.
- Photo 14: Bend the remaining length of the four panels over the basket's bottom, cut to fit if needed, and lace down with wire.
- Screw the outer cone and liner to the hardware cloth covered basket.
- Install in the ground as per instructions for burying your Green Cone (photos 7 and 8).



## Hardware cloth sources

### Home Builders Center

1110 W. Nickerson  
206.283.6060  
\$3.00/ft (4 feet wide)

### Magnolia Ace Hardware

2420 – 32nd Ave  
206.282.1916  
\$2.99/ft (3 or 4 feet widths)

### Stewart Lumber and Hardware Co.

1761 Rainier Ave  
206.324.5000  
\$1.11/ft (2 feet wide)

### Stephenson Ace Hardware

9000 Roosevelt WY NE  
206.522.3324  
\$2.99/ft (3 feet wide)

### Greenwood Hardware

7201 Greenwood N  
206.783.2900  
\$1.69/ft (2 feet wide)

### Junction True Value

4747 – 44th SW  
206.932.0450  
\$1.89/ft (3 feet wide)

### Crown Hill Hardware

NW 80th and 15th NW  
206.784.0016  
\$1.99/ft (3 feet wide)

### Tweedy & Popp Ace

1916 N 45th  
206.632.2290  
\$2.49/ft (2 feet wide)

### Home Depot

11616 Aurora N  
206.361.9600  
\$10.95 (2 ft X 10 ft roll)

### Home Depot

2701 Utah S  
206.467.9200  
\$10.95 (2 ft X 10 ft roll)

### Lowe's

2700 Ranier S  
206.760.0832  
\$11.59 (2 ft X 10 ft roll)

## Managing food scraps in your kitchen

Keep food scraps in a covered container. Clean the container every time you empty it.

Rub baking soda, lemon juice or vinegar inside the container to freshen and remove odors.

### Set a trap to control fruit flies

To make a fruit fly trap you will need:

- Drinking glass or plastic container
- Rubber band
- 1/8 – 1/4 cup beer, wine or apple juice
- Piece of plastic to more than cover top of glass or container

#### Directions

- Place the beer, wine or apple juice in the bottom of the glass.
- Place plastic over container and slowly push down in the center of the plastic, forming a funnel. Plastic should not touch liquid.
- Secure rubber band around plastic and top of glass or container.

- Poke a hole in the middle of the plastic funnel using a sharp point such as a ballpoint pen or pencil.
- Set the trap near your kitchen food scrap container. Fruit flies will fly through the hole and once they are in the trap they are unable to fly out.

