

9 TIPS TO AVOID RODENTS & OTHER UNWANTED CRITTERS

- 1** Do not compost meat, dairy, fats/oil, cooked food.



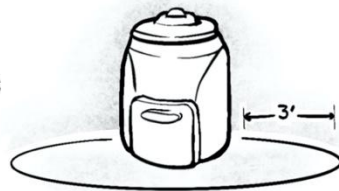
- 2** Incorporate all bits of food well into pile, never leave any exposed or visible.



- 3** Cover all piles with a thick layer of leaves or other browns.



- 4** Maintain at least 3 feet of open space all around your system (this makes rodents nervous about predators).



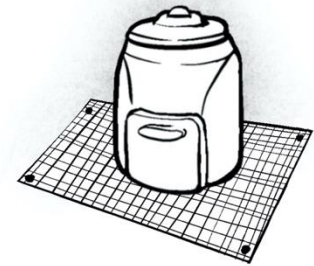
- 5** Avoid clutter and trim back grasses and shrubs to eliminate potential rodent hiding places.



- 6** Turn piles thoroughly and regularly so rodents see no opportunity for a habitat.



- 7** Bin systems need a barrier at the base to prevent habitat formation where it's nice and warm (1/4-inch hardware cloth or something else inhospitable like cement or a 6-inch dug-out pit with sand or gravel).



- 8** If you have space, consider moving system from time to time. Rodents like habitats that are undisturbed.

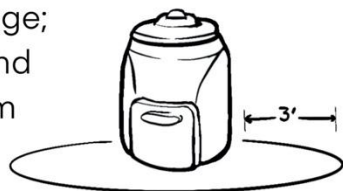


- 9** Activity is good!

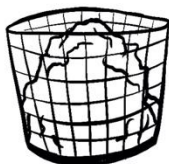


GETTING STARTED

- 1** **Locate bin** (good drainage; convenient to kitchen and water source; need room to move around)



- 2** **Set up storage for browns** (carbon source or bulking materials)



- 3** **Have tools accessible** (pitch fork, bucket, temperature probe)



- 4** **Decide on kitchen pail for food scraps**



- 5** **Create a 4- to 6-inch base of browns, such as twigs or wood chips, in the bottom of the bin for aeration**



- 6** **Build a pile** (either layer browns and greens, or add greens to a big pile of browns)



- 7** **Aerate and mix as needed** (e.g., aim for weekly for first few weeks, or based on temperature or odor)



- 8** **Check and adjust moisture as needed**



- 9** **After 8 to 12 weeks, harvest finished compost**



- 10** **Screen (optional)**



- 11** **When bin is full, empty and move, and start a new pile**

