

**TABLE 3: COMPOSTABLE MATERIALS REQUIRING SPECIAL HANDLING**

<b>MATERIAL</b>	<b>C/N</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
Apple pomace	N	High moisture content – spread on pile in thin layers
Cardboard (non-recyclable)	C	Slow to decompose – shred into small pieces
Corn cobs and stalks	C	Slow to decompose – run through shredder or chop in very small pieces, mix with nitrogen-rich material
Citrus rinds	N	Slow to decompose – chop into small pieces
Diseased plants	C or N	Diseases may be hard to eliminate. Sun bake plants in black plastic bag until thoroughly cooked, leave in hot pile (131-140 °F) for 2 to 4 weeks, or omit from pile
Grass clippings with chemicals	N	Most pesticides degrade in 3-12 months <sup>1</sup> . Leave clippings on lawn for 2-3 weeks (best) or add direct to pile if materials compost for at least 12 months.
Hedge trimmings	C or N	Slow to decompose – thin layers of hedge trimmings can be used occasionally to increase pore space; chop twigs and branches into small pieces
Lime	O, alkalizer	Changes pile chemistry. Too much lime hurts bacteria and other microorganisms – omit from pile or use very sparingly in thin layers if pile is going anaerobic <sup>2</sup> .

<sup>1</sup> Do not use grass or weeds treated with Clopyralid or Picloram, such as Confront, Stinger, Hornet, Tordon, or others with these chemicals. Very low levels remain in compost that damages certain plants.

<sup>2</sup> Do not mix with manure.



Nut shells – walnut, pecan	C	Slow to decompose – pulverize with shredder
Paper, glossy colored	C	It is better to put glossy magazines and inserts into your paper recycling bin. But if added to the compost bin, remember glossy paper is typically coated with clay and may be slow to decompose
Peat moss	C, low in nutrients	Highly moisture absorbent, slow to decompose – mix thoroughly with other materials, add in small quantities.
Pine cones	C	Slow to decompose – shred or chop into very small pieces
Quackgrass	N	Omit from pile unless Quack is sun baked in black plastic bag until thoroughly cooked
Rhubarb leaves	N	Contains oxalic acid. Add in small quantities, mix thoroughly with other materials
Sawdust	C	Slow to decompose, can negatively affect aeration – work into pile in thin sprinklings; mix with nitrogen rich materials; omit any treated lumber sawdust
Soil	O, activator source	Can make finished compost heavy – add small quantities in thin layers as soil activator or omit from pile.
Sod	N	Slow to decompose – break into small clumps, mix thoroughly with other materials or cover top of the pile with roots up, grass down (better in fall) or compost separately with roots side up, water thoroughly, cover with a dark tarp



Walnut leaves	C	Contain juglone which can be toxic plants – mix thoroughly with other materials, toxin will biodegrade in two to four weeks
Weeds, pernicious	C	Rhizomatous root system hard to kill – sun bake in plastic bag until thoroughly dried or omit from pile
Weeds, other	N	Weed seeds hard to kill – best to use when green and no seed heads present or leave in hot pile (131-140°F) at least 1 week
Wood chips	C	Slow to decompose. Can improve aeration, shred or chop into smaller pieces if possible; mix with nitrogen-rich materials; omit any treated lumber chips



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