

Most gardens have room for a compost bin, but it's sometimes too small to take all your garden waste at one time. Dealing with your garden rubbish may be a problem, so, plan a garden that produces less waste in the first place.

## Plants producing little waste

Choose plants to suit you and your garden. Select plants that will like the soil you have and that are sufficiently hardy for the Borders. A happy plant will thrive, so won't need composting. Choose slow-growing plants that won't outgrow your space. They'll need little pruning to keep them within bounds.

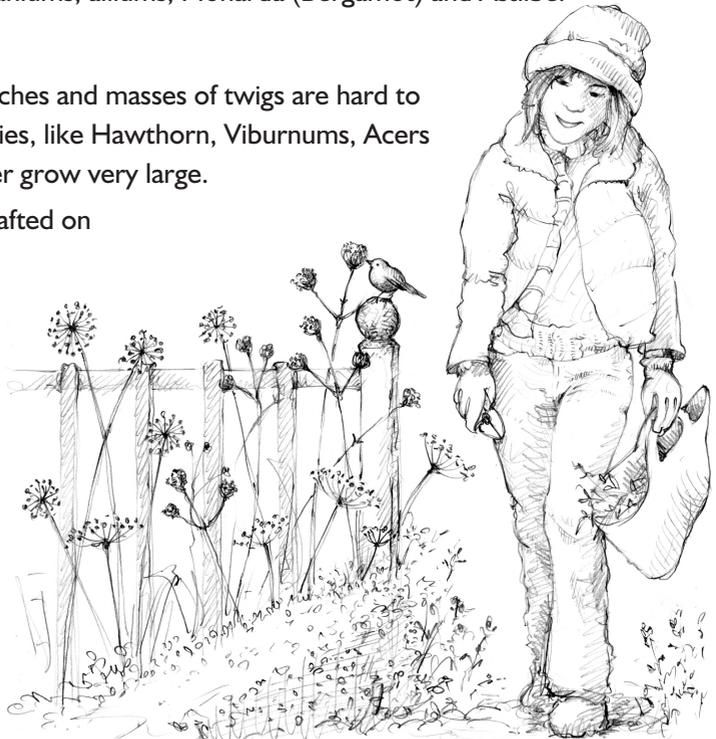
## Herbaceous plants

Choose perennials that last for years rather than annuals. Some species have attractive seed heads, so you can leave them standing all winter. When they eventually fall over in February or March, the leaves will have rotted away and there will only be a stem to dispose of. Suitable candidates are: Eryngiums, Sedum spectabile, hardy geraniums, alliums, Monarda (Bergamot) and Astilbe.

## Trees

Trees with large branches and masses of twigs are hard to compost. Select species, like Hawthorn, Viburnums, Acers or Sorbus. They never grow very large.

Choose fruit trees grafted on dwarfing rootstocks, like M9 or M27 for apples, Quince C for pears and Pixy for plums. Prune fruit trees each summer to control growth. The prunings will be softer and smaller and easier to compost.



## Hedges

Hedges must be trimmed and kept bushy and tight. One annual cut produces a well-shaped hedge: prune deciduous species in winter, evergreens in summer. Choose slow-growing species to reduce the volume of clippings for composting. *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Ellwood's Gold' only grows by about 20cm a year whereas Leyland Cypress puts on 80-100cm.

Slow-growing hedging plants include: Holly; Box; Dwarf berberis; Deutzia; some flowering currants and some Pimpinellifolia roses. Other evergreens are Portugal Laurel (*Prunus lusitanica*); Yew and Thuja varieties like Thuja occidentalis "Smaragd" and Thuja plicata 'Atrovirens'. Some of these make good free-standing shrubs.

## Slow-growing shrubs

Choose shrubs like: Mahonia, Daphnes, Chaenomeles, Euonymus, Skimmia and shrubby Loniceras. They need no pruning.

Always check a plant's final height. It should be shown on the label. If accepting a gift from a friend – ask!

## Lawns

Provided it's not in a shady place, grass normally grows well, even when it's used as a children's football pitch. When you apply a lawn feed, grass grows more vigorously than necessary. So, if you want to reduce your volume of mowings, do not feed the lawn. During a dry spell of weather do not water the lawn. Cut the grass twice a week and leave the small amount of clippings on the lawn. They quickly disappear.

Turn part of your lawn into a wildflower area. Leave the grass to grow. Some grasses produce attractive seed heads and a few wild flowers may appear. Add more colour by planting bulbs and wildflower plugs, like Red Campion and Oxeye Daisies. This way, you only cut the lawn once a year.

## Weeds

Weeds can be composted. To reduce the volume hoe regularly during dry weather, to prevent weeds from growing. Mulch bare soil. The mulch should be 10cm deep, but doesn't have to be so deep if you first lay a thick layer of newspaper on the soil and then cover with bark, compost, woodchip or leafmould.

For more information contact ASK Organic [www.askorganic.co.uk](http://www.askorganic.co.uk) or 01450 860778  
Visit the Home Composting Display within Woodside Plant Centre, Ancrum, Jedburgh.

For a free compost bin or information on Waste and Recycling contact  
Scottish Borders Council on-line at [www.scotborders.gov.uk](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk)

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