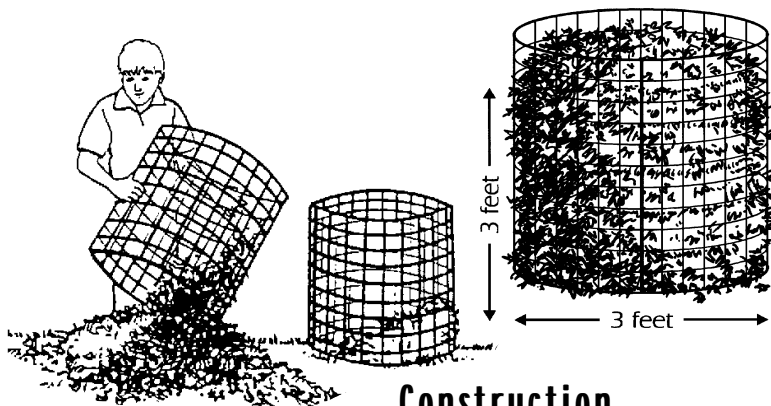




Composting 101

Moveable Compost Pen

A wire holding pen is inexpensive and easy to build. It allows easy access to the finished compost as the top is still breaking down. The wire may be lifted or the wire ties may be removed to unwrap the pen. Then the compost can be mixed by turning it back into the pen.



Construction

1. Trim the ends of the hardware cloth so that the wires are flush with a cross wire. This gets rid of edges that could puncture or scratch you when you are handling the pen. File the cuts to make a smooth edge.
2. Bend the hardware cloth into a circle and stand it in place for the compost pile.
3. Cut the heavy wires into convenient lengths for the ties. Using pliers, connect the ends of the hardware cloth with the wire ties.

MATERIALS

- A 10 to 16 foot length of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch hardware cloth. This length of hardware cloth will produce a compost pen that is about 3 to 5 feet in diameter. A smaller pen will result in slower composting. If the pen is larger, moving it will be difficult. (**Note:** To calculate the pen diameter, divide the length of the wire by 3.14; to determine how much wire you want for a certain diameter pen, multiply by 3.14. For example, if you want a 4 foot diameter pen, multiply 4 by 3.14 to get $12\frac{1}{2}$ feet.)
- Heavy wire to tie the ends of the hardware cloth together.
- **Tools:** Wire cutters or tin snips, pliers, metal file, and work gloves.

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