	Mother Nature	$$ Chemical fertilizers	$$$ Organic fertilizers	$ Commercial compost	Homemade compost
ingredients	whatever grows and dies/falls "leave it" grasscycling cold compost pile	specific nutrients single or combinations derived from chemically manufactured materials	specific nutrients single or combinations derived from rock, mined natural deposits, agricultural byproducts, ocean products	municipal sources from "green waste" other producers use manures forest waste and/or agricultural waste read the label!	browns & greens you choose micro and macroorganisms from your site
pros	no cost, low effort feeds soil/organisms mulch benefits	low effort rapid results addresses specific nutrient needs or soil deficits	low effort rapid or slow results addresses specific nutrient needs or soil deficits feeds soil/organisms	low effort adds organic material slow-release nutrients over long period, can't "burn" plants can have truckloads delivered	FUN! bin free to low $ high quality with slow-release nutrients micronutrients can't "burn" plants feeds soil/organisms
cons	sloooow process low quantity possible plant pathogens and noxious weeds nutrients: status quo	salt build up alters/decreases soil microbial populations rapid growth = more vulnerable to insect attack toxic trace elements toxic runoff	more expensive than chemical fertilizers hard to time nutrient release high carbon footprint (transport)	high carbon footprint (transport & processing) possible herbicide/ pesticide contaminants, plant pathogens and noxious weeds	compost thermometer approx. $20 higher effort requires space

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Sources: *Teaming with Microbes,* Jeff Lowenfels and Wayne Lewis • *Western Nevada Co. Gardening Guide*
http://web.extension.illinois.edu/homecompost/