

# Tumbling bin: **Dual-compartment Tumbler**

**Size:** 66 cm wide x 71 cm long x 91 cm high

**Maximum capacity:** 0.14 meters<sup>3</sup> (5 feet<sup>3</sup>)

**Price:** \$100—125

**Tester satisfaction:** high

**Features:** Black plastic barrel split into two chambers on metal stand. Sliding plastic door, adjustable vent and small internal baffles.

**What you can put in it:** Kitchen scraps (excluding meat, bones, dairy, and fats), leaves, grass clippings, other yard waste (excluding cat or dog waste).

**“Yuck” factor:** Moderate-to-low. Materials are neatly enclosed and break down with minimal interaction.

**Complexity to use:** Moderate-to-low. Some knowledge of balancing ingredients and adding water is helpful.

**In winter:** Breakdown stops, but you can keep adding materials as long as there is room. However the lid may freeze shut.

**Mobility:** The bin is very easy to move when empty and moderately easy to move when full.

**Available at:** Lee Valley Tools Ltd.



Tested by: **Amber**

Amber is a busy young woman living on an acreage in a household of four. She strives to compost everything she can from her home and farm, including cooked food, meat, and bones. Amber uses a variety of different compost systems, and also feeds food scraps to her chickens. At the start of our test period, she had already been using the dual-compartment tumbler for six months.

Amber is an experienced and adventurous composter, but her full life makes it difficult to consistently monitor a compost bin. She is sometimes away for several weeks at a time.

## **Results:**

**Testing period:** May 2014—January 2015

### **Inputs:**

- 193 litres of organic waste (69% greens, 17% browns, 3% dirt or finished compost, 12% other)
- Added 2.5 litres of water
- Aerated 13 times for a total of 50 minutes

### **Outputs:**

- No finished compost was harvested during the test period

## **Recommendations:**

The dual-compartment tumbler is a good, simple system for a one-to-two person household with small amounts of food waste and little to no yard waste. On its own, it is not sufficient to deal with large amounts of food waste or even moderate amounts of yard waste.

For a tumbling bin, it is relatively inexpensive. Because it is off the ground and enclosed, it is also rodent-proof.

Tumbling bins are built for batch compost. The Lee Valley tumbler makes this easy by splitting its barrel into two smaller compartments, which can be filled one at a time. This can work quite well, although if you have more than a little organic waste it is easy to fill the second compartment before the first has finished curing. While the compartments are too small to hold onto a lot of heat, Amber reported temperatures between 35-40°C in the active side of the tumbler.

As with other tumbling bins, a major drawback of the Lee Valley tumbler is that it becomes difficult to use in winter. While you can keep adding organic materials as long as there is room, the small capacity makes it more likely the bin will fill up before spring. As well, the plastic sliding door becomes brittle in the cold and can easily freeze shut, making it susceptible to breaking.