

Tumbling bin: **Ecomposter**

Size: 81 cm diameter

Maximum capacity: 0.27 meters³ (9.5 feet³)

Price: \$175—225

Tester satisfaction: high

Features: Black plastic panels, locking round lid, aeration tubes extending inwards and acting as internal baffles. Comes with round stand.

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 made to roll and is easy to move to a new location, although too heavy to lift when full.

Available at: Previously online; currently unavailable.



Tested by: **Heather**



Heather lives in a household of two on an acreage outside of Saskatoon. She has several years of experience with outdoor compost bins. Her yard gives her plenty of grass clippings, tree leaves, and other yard waste to compost, along with the scraps from her kitchen.

Heather thought the Ecomposter was fun to use, but ultimately too small to be practical for her needs. She enjoyed rolling the ball around, and her large yard gave her plenty of room. When the ball filled up in October, she set it aside and did not return to it in the spring.

Results:

Testing period: May 2014—October 2015

Inputs:

- 278 litres of organic waste (55% greens, 45% browns, 0% dirt or finished compost, 0% other)
- Added 10 litres of water
- Aerated 7 times for a total of 8 minutes

Outputs:

- No finished compost was harvested during the test period

Recommendations:

The Ecomposter can be fun to roll around, especially for children. It can work well as a very small tumbler for people with mainly food waste or only small amounts of yard waste, but is far too small to deal with large amounts of yard waste on its own. It may also be too small to heat up effectively.

As with other tumbling bins, it works best to combine the ball with at least one other system. Tumbling bins are built for batch compost rather than continuous use. This means filling a bin with organic waste and then switching to a different bin while the first bin matures. This makes harvesting much easier. The first bin should still be turned and kept moist during this time.

The ball arrives in pieces and needs to be assembled. Heather reported that the attached instructions were very clear and she was done in less than two hours.

As shown in the picture, the ball is built with aeration tubes that extend inward into the compost. These tubes provide a good balance between airflow and preventing materials from drying out. They also act as internal baffles to break up and mix materials when rolled. The ball is not watertight, which prevents it getting soggy inside but does mean the base gets a bit mucky from leachate. The lid is tight-fitting and does not warp.