

HOW COFFEE GROUNDS CAN IMPROVE YOUR GARDEN

Why Coffee Grounds Are Used As a Garden Supplement



Used coffee grounds can often be sourced from your local coffee roastery or café and usually for free.

Technically a 'seed meal', used coffee grounds serve as an inexpensive or even free (certain coffee roasters and cafes often have a bin from which gardeners take what they want) soil supplement that also provides extra advantages.

Due to their high nitrogen content, used grounds may be applied either directly onto the soil surface, around the base of the plant or tilled into the soil to offer time-released benefits.

How Do I Apply Coffee Grounds To My Garden?

There are multiple ways to incorporate used coffee grounds into your growing space. It is important to use used grounds, as the caffeine content of freshly-ground coffee may cause unwanted complications or affect local wildlife.

Drip coffee grounds, rather than boiled coffee, tend to contain a higher nitrogen level; all types of soil will also receive copper, phosphorus, magnesium and potassium, helping to condition the soil and increase its structure and fecundity. The grounds are also great for tomatoes, carrots, lettuce, fruit trees, berry shrubs, etc.

NOTE: Fermented or rotting coffee grounds should be avoided in order to prevent the same from happening to your beneficial organic matter.



Worm bins are a great place to dump used coffee grounds. The worms regard this additive as a tasty treat

- **Compost:** Coffee grounds are a good 'green' that will help to break down the 'browns' (use unbleached filters). Be sure to regularly turn your compost; do not let the pile or bucket sit for too long.
- **Worm Bins:** Supposedly as tasty as ice cream, serving as a treat for worms, spent grounds can be combined with kitchen scraps, fruit and vegetable peels/rinds, paper and cardboard, etc.

- **Side-Dressing Fertilizer:** Feed the grounds directly to the plant, as "the carbon-to-nitrogen ratio of coffee grounds can be as low as 11:1, an ideal ratio for plant and soil nutrition.
- **Sheet Mulch:** This method is good for preparing or supplementing large growing plots, although the layer should not be applied thicker than a half-inch, in order to prevent mold (typically a 4:1 ratio is used).
- **Soil Amendment:** Plowed or tilled six to eight inches into the soil, used grounds offer both macro- and micro-nutrients to your plants and help to condition and aerate the soil.
- **Foliar Spray:** Soak about a half-pound of spent grounds in five litres of water and spray the solution onto your plants; paying particular attention to the underside of the leaves.

Additional Benefits of Applying Coffee Grounds to your Garden

As an added bonus, slugs and snails tend to be deterred, and cats may also be repelled through the use of coffee grounds. If a pesticide effect is desired, organic brands of coffee may be less effective, as they usually do not contain pesticides.