

Wire Mesh Composting Bins

Wire mesh bins are the quickest and least expensive bins to construct. They can be used as holding and turning bins, or in combination with one of the larger bins as temporary storage.

Simply adding yardwaste as it is cleaned up is appropriate for these bins. With as little effort as occasional moistening, compost will be ready in six months to two years.

Materials

Circle Bin

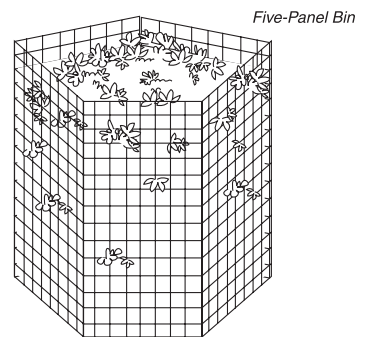
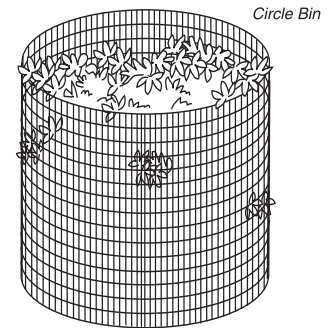
13 feet of 36" wide 1" poultry wire or 1/2" hardware cloth, or gauge plastic
Four metal or plastic clips, or copper wire ties
Three or four 4-foot wooden or metal posts to support poultry wire bins

Five-Panel Bin

15 feet of 24" wide 12-to 16-gauge plastic coated wire mesh, or 1/2" cloth
20 metal or plastic clips, or plastic coated copper wire ties

Tools

Eye protection, heavy duty wire or tin snips, pliers, hammer or metal file, work gloves.



Construction

• Circle Bin

Roll out and cut 12½ feet of poultry wire, hardware cloth or plastic coated wire mesh. If using poultry wire, roll back 3 to 4 inches at each end of cut piece to provide a strong clean edge to work with.

Set wire circle in place for compost pile and secure ends with clips or wire ties. Space wood or metal posts around perimeter inside wire circle. Pound posts firmly into the ground while tensing them against wire to provide support. If using hardware cloth, trim ends flush with a cross wire to eliminate sharp edges. File each cut edge to ensure safer handling. Bend hardware cloth into circle and attach ends with clips or ties.

Set bin in place for composting. Bins made with hardware cloth should be strong enough to stand without posts. Plastic-coated mesh bins are made in the same manner, taking extra effort to bend into circular shapes. Filing the wire ends may cause the plastic coating to tear, so strike the end of each wire with a hammer to knock down any jagged edges.

• Five-Panel Bin

Cut five 3-foot long sections of the wire mesh. Make cuts at the top of the next row of squares to leave 1" wires sticking out along one cut edge of each panel. This edge will be the top of the bin. Use a pair of pliers to bend over and tightly clamp each wire on this edge. Attach panels using clips or wire ties.

Bend, file or break off all exposed wire ends for protection. The five-panel bin can be enlarged or reduced depending on amount of compost. Simply add or remove panels.