

Compost is the natural, sustainable, low risk way to improve your soils in any landscape.

In general a quality compost product will have been through a full composting process, which involves pasteurisation and microbial transformation for at least 6 weeks. The product will be designed for specific applications and should be supplied with standard product information sheets.

One of the advantages of compost use is its versatility and effectiveness for different applications.

Sporting Fields

Recycled organic products like compost can be used to improve turf establishment and renovate or top dress turf on playing grounds.

Soil conditioning for turf establishment

Compost can give substantial benefits if applied as a soil conditioner before laying turf. Applying compost before seeding or laying turf will help plants to establish quickly and grow strong root systems.

High establishment and growth rates of turf with RO use can significantly improve the playability of sporting fields.

In a NSW trial, compost applied before turf seeding resulted in 94% turf cover compared to just 37% turf cover where compost had not been applied. Turf biomass was also five times higher in the area treated with compost after just three months. In this case, costly rectification work was avoided in the treated area.

In sporting fields with high clay content, the addition of composted soil conditioner will improve soil porosity and reduce compaction. Less soil compaction makes it easier for plant roots to penetrate deeper into the soil and achieve healthy growth, maximising establishment rates.



Coarse textured soils like sands or sandy loams will also benefit from compost application. In these cases, compost will improve moisture and nutrient retention in the soil which is essential for healthy plant growth.

Compost provides nutrients to growing plants and can also increase the effectiveness of other fertilisers applied to the soil. Often fertiliser applications are no longer required or are needed less frequently after the use of compost and composted soil conditioners.

Application as a soil conditioner: Apply up to a maximum of 150mm in depth or 150Lm⁻². Rates may need to be reduced if composted soil conditioner is high in soluble salts (check electrical conductivity (EC) levels in compost specification).

Top dressing with recycled organic products
Fine composted material can be applied to turf as a top dressing. Top dressing is used to improve soil structure, increase drainage and level out playing surfaces. Soil compaction is one of the biggest problems on playing surfaces and it is especially important to try and reduce compaction in high traffic areas.



*Perth Esplanade -
compost trials*

Compaction can decrease the ability of turf to recover after heavy use, increase the likelihood of plant diseases and may also lead to an increase in falling injuries.

Compost has some additional benefits that make it a more attractive choice than traditional soil or sand top dressing. Compost contains many nutrients that are essential for plant growth as well as bacteria which can suppress plant diseases. This can help turf recover after heavy use and promote improved plant growth. Using recycled organic (compost) products is also more sustainable than harvesting natural soil/sand for top dressing.

Application as top dressing: Top dressing is usually undertaken after soil aeration (holes punched into soil surface) and compost can be applied at a rate of up to 10Lm⁻² or to a depth of 10mm.



An initiative of Compost Australia

For more information and a list of quality suppliers, go to

www.compostforsoils.com.au

the resource for compost users