

Tumbler Troubleshooting

PROBLEM	CAUSES	SOLUTIONS
Is too wet	Not enough air flow	Ensure the air holes are not blocked and turn more frequently.
	Carbon/Nitrogen ratio is unbalanced	Gradually add more browns.
	Too much moisture	Take contents out and allow them to dry, for example on a tarp, then place back into tumbler.
Is clumping	Feedstocks are too wet	Clumping in tumblers is inevitable, but large clumps can be fixed by gradually adding browns and breaking apart large clusters by hand.
No composting progress	Not enough nitrogen (green material)	Add more nitrogen-rich greens such as food scraps or coffee grounds.
	Too Dry	Add water or moist greens.
There are pests	Worms / isopods / black soldier flies / slugs / fly larvae	Helpful and part of a thriving compost ecosystem, not an issue.
	Fruit fly swarms/ house flies / spiders / centipedes / earwigs / small mammals	Add browns, avoid adding more moisture, and turn often to avoid standing water. Predatory insects are inevitable but can be decreased by keeping compost healthy.
Not getting hot enough	Not always an issue	90-100F is normal for a tumbler. Since tumblers are small, they don't have enough mass to get to high temperatures. Adjusting green/brown ratio can help increase temperature.

