



## Let's Celebrate Earth Day!

[Earth Day](#) was established on April 22, 1970 when people were becoming environmentally aware and created a special day to come together and acknowledge their commitment to protecting and sustaining our planet. Click here to see a little more about the [history of Earth Day](#). Check out this news video from the [original Earth Day in 1970](#). Have we taken action on some of the things people were concerned about back then?

At McKinley, our students do many things to help protect the environment and make our school better and healthier! You have probably helped with composting, which reduces the waste going to the landfill AND helps improve our garden soil! Maybe you've come to school for a Green Day work party, when families come together to make our school more beautiful. Green Day projects have included planting trees and gardens, building raised garden beds and the garden shed, painting the storm drains to raise awareness about protecting our ocean, and adding tile and other colorful art to our school campus. During garden class, you've probably helped by picking up trash around campus, and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders even organized a trash pickup during recess this year!

EXTENDING THIS...what ideas do you have about ways we could make our school a healthier place for students, teachers/staff, and for the planet too? Send us your ideas and once we get back to campus, we can work together to bring about more positive changes to our school!

Here are some ideas from [San Diego Unified Recycling](#)

You've learned a lot at school and garden class about which items we can recycle, and also what kind of things we can compost, the ones that are BIODEGRADABLE! [...it breaks down!]. This includes fruit and vegetable scraps, leaves, paper and much more! Share your knowledge with your family this Earth Day! Check out page 2 for more ideas on how you can compost at home.

Let us know how things are GROWING as well as DECOMPOSING with a photo,

a short message or a longer message!

You can message us via email (below).

Ms. Mindy & Ms. Marney

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McKinley students are very **KNOWLEDGEABLE** about **compost** and how decomposers (the F.B.I., see below) help build our soil. If you'd like to begin composting at home, check out these ideas>>>

To decide what is best for you and your family answer the following questions:

- How much space and what kind of space do I have to compost in?
- How much material do I have to compost? (what is BIODEGRADABLE?...it breaks down!)
- How much work do I want to contribute to this process?

If you have an outdoor space, some people just bury their compost (food scraps/greens). This is the least work. Everything breaks down. You can also make a compost pile outside with your GREENS (scraps) and BROWNS (see below) either inside a protective container or just buried within BROWNS so that the raw food scraps are not easily accessible to pests. This method requires some regular turning and ultimate harvesting the finished compost. If you do not have outdoor space for a bin or pile you can consider using a container to raise earthworms. The worms do all the soil making effort, but like the compost pile method, ultimately you will need to harvest/sift out finished compost and return worms to their home to break things down. You might remember how we did this at school!

Remember, all composting methods benefit from the magic four ingredients:

- GREENS: food waste, coffee grounds – these are your Nitrogen source!
- BROWNS: dry dead things like leaves, shredded paper/cardboard – these are your Carbon source! \*NOTE: About 3 containers of BROWNS for each soggy container of GREENS.\*
- AIR – a soggy compost will not have aerobic (breathing probiotic or GOOD bacteria).
- WATER – a dry compost will not host living things.

NOTE: A balance between AIR and WATER makes your mix teeming with F.B.I. – the secret agents of decomposition (breaking things down) also known as FUNGUS, BACTERIA and INVERTEBRATES

For some more references on composting check out these links:

<https://www.solanacenter.org/resources/compost-it-yourself>

<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/how-create-and-maintain-indoor-worm-composting-bin>

<https://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/residential/composting>

Follow this link if you are curious about what happens at our local landfill. [Click here](#) if you want to watch big trucks hauling waste from all over San Diego.