

FOGO FAQs

Have you got a FOGO question? Read on for the answers to our most commonly asked questions, or email us at fogo@albany.wa.gov.au if you can't find your answer here!

What does FOGO mean?

FOGO stands for Food Organics & Garden Organics, and refers to the kerbside collection of food scraps and garden organics, which are then turned into compost.

Why do we have a FOGO system?

The FOGO system helps you separate your waste at the source, so we can recover more as a resource to be used again instead of sending it to landfill.

Prior to FOGO, around 30% of Albany's household waste was food scraps and other organic material. When organic waste breaks down in landfill it releases methane (a greenhouse gas more potent than carbon) and moisture that creates a harmful leachate when combined with rain and condensation.

Going FOGO helps our community divert that waste away from landfill and create high quality compost instead, improving the impact we have on our environment. FOGO is part of the City of Albany's commitment to a sustainable and progressive approach to waste management.

The FOGO system has been successfully implemented in metropolitan and regional councils in WA and across Australia and is a priority of WA's Waste Avoidance and Resource Strategy 2030.

What happens to our FOGO waste?

Once collected from your kerbside, your FOGO waste is taken to the Bakers Junction Waste Facility for initial screening and decontamination. Next, it is transferred to a composting facility in Palmdale (approximately 50km north east of Albany), where it is composted and matured using a windrow system. The compost produced from FOGO material is incorporated into soil improvers for use in agriculture, farming, parks and home gardens.

What does my bin service look like?

Your household should have three bins:

- 240 litre lime-green lidded FOGO bin for all food scraps and garden clippings. Collected fortnightly, apart from 8 weeks in mid-December to mid-February when there is a weekly collection.
- 240 litre yellow lidded Recycling bin. Collected fortnightly on the alternate week to your FOGO bin.
- 140 litre red lidded General Waste bin for items that can't be recycled or composted. Collected fortnightly with your FOGO bin, on the alternate week to your Recycling bin.

What is my collection schedule?

The collection schedule is:

- FOGO bin and General Waste bin one week, and
- Recycling bin the opposite week.

From mid-December to mid-February the FOGO bin will be collected weekly.

Need to check your bin schedule? Visit our [Bin Collections](#) page for options, or download the [Recycle Right](#) app and set up your own bin day reminders.

Why is the General Waste bin collected fortnightly?

Making the most of your FOGO bin means you put less rubbish in your General Waste bin. Most households using their FOGO bin for food and garden waste still have space in their General Waste bin at the end of the fortnight.

Check out our [Tips to Reduce Waste](#) and make sure you:

- Recycle your paper, cardboard, cans, plastic containers and glass bottles and jars.
- Take items such as batteries, light bulbs and e-waste to the drop off point at Fossicker's Tip Shop.
- Avoid excess packaging wherever possible.

For more information on reducing your household's waste, visit www.wastesorted.wa.gov.au. Our Waste Team also offers free home visits to discuss your household's waste needs. Please phone 6820300 to book.

If you still need more bin space there is an option to add an additional bin collection to your annual rates. Please email rates@albany.wa.gov.au for information. If you're renting please contact your property manager.

Residents with extra waste due to medical needs can contact our Waste Team on 6820 3000 or fogo@albany.wa.gov.au to discuss additional free options.



What can I put in my FOGO bin?

All food waste, including:

- Fruit and vegetable scraps
- Meat, bones and seafood
- Egg shells
- Cooked food
- Dairy
- Coffee grounds and tea leaves

Other organic material, including:

- Garden prunings
- Lawn clippings
- Kitty litter (paper or clay based)
- Soiled paper and cardboard
- Used napkins and tissues
- Shredded paper



The contents of this bin will be composted, so it's important to keep plastic and glass OUT. All food waste goes into your FOGO bin either in a compostable liner, wrapped in newspaper or loose in the bin. Please make sure all food packaging is removed and placed in the correct bin - plastic/foam packaging, stickers and labels will contaminate the compost.

Only use compostable liners as these will break down naturally during the composting process. Biodegradable or any other plastic bags/liners must NOT go in your FOGO bin as these will not break down.

For a full A-Z list of what goes in which bin, visit [Recycle Right](#).

You can also contact the Waste Team on 6820 3000 or fogo@albany.wa.gov.au.

What is a kitchen caddy and how do I use it?

As part of the launch of the FOGO service in 2021, the City of Albany provided each household with a 7L kitchen caddy and a supply of certified compostable caddy liners. If you don't have a kitchen caddy, they can be purchased from a number of local retailers, and you can pick up a sticker for the lid from Fossicker's Tip Shop as a reminder of what to put in it.

The caddy can be used to collect food scraps in the kitchen. Every few days (or once your caddy is full) you can transfer the contents to your FOGO bin.

Do I have to use the liners in the kitchen caddy?

Compostable liners can be used to provide a barrier between the caddy and the food waste. You can also line your caddy with newspaper, or not use any liner at all. Rinse the caddy out after washing up the dishes, or you can pop it in the dishwasher.

Please do not use biodegradable or other plastic bags, as these will not break down and will contaminate the compost. Look for the AS4736 seedling logo to ensure compostability.



How can I keep my caddy fresh for longer?

- If using compostable liners, replace them every few days as they will start to break down.
- Don't overfill your compostable caddy liners, to prevent breakage.
- Tie the caddy liner up securely before placing it in your lime green-lidded FOGO bin to reduce potential odours.
- Line the caddy with newspaper or paper towel to help soak up excess moisture if needed – these can go in your lime green-lidded FOGO bin too.
- Wrapping the bag in newspaper or paper towel can help stop sharp bones or prawn shells piercing the liner.
- Let hot substances cool first and dispose of your bin liner whenever you put in wet food scraps.
- Wash your caddy regularly- it can even go through the dish washer!

Where can I get more compostable kitchen caddy liners?

Residents with a kerbside bin service can collect a new roll of 75 compostable liners every 6 months from Fossicker's Tip Shop at the Hanrahan Road Waste Facility. You can also use newspaper, or no liner at all – it's up to you. If you choose to purchase additional liners, please ensure they are certified compostable and display the Australian Standards seedling symbol.

How can I make my compostable liners last longer?

Depending on the amount of food scraps you have, liners can last up to four days. When you need to change the liner, simply tie up and tip into your FOGO bin.

Moisture can make them compost faster, so place newspaper or used paper towel at the bottom of your liner if your food scraps are wet. Store your liners in a cool and dry spot away from heat and sunlight.

Top tips to reduce smells and deter insects in your FOGO bin

- To reduce odours, make sure you put your FOGO bin out for collection every fortnight, even if it's not full.
- Food contaminated cardboard/paper e.g., pizza boxes, paper towel and tissues as well as shredded paper can go in your FOGO bin. These will help absorb moisture and reduce odour. (Just make sure not to include glossy cardboard as this may have a thin layer of plastic.)
- Wrap and place any smelly food scraps such as seafood shells in the freezer until the night before your collection day.
- Keep your bins in the shade with lids tightly closed.
- Make sure there are no holes in the bin - replace missing vents or tape over the holes.
- Layer cardboard (tape removed), newspaper or green waste at the bottom of the FOGO bin to help absorb liquids and prevent waste sticking to the inside of the bin. I
- Where possible, allow lawn clippings and garden cuttings to dry out before going in the bin so your bin isn't too heavy and cut garden waste to size so the lid can be closed.
- Try sprinkling baking soda, kitty litter, vinegar, oil of cloves or lemon juice into the bin after it has been emptied.
- Pick up pet poo with newspaper and then wrap in a compostable liner, or leave in a neat pile near your back fence before transferring to the bin the night before collection.
- Clean your bin regularly with hot soapy water. Citronella and tea tree oils are natural insect deterrents which can be dabbed around the top of the bin.
- Try using a bin deodoriser.

Our household doesn't have much food or garden waste - do we still need to use the FOGO bin?

Even if you don't have a lot of food or garden waste, residents are encouraged to use the FOGO bin to ensure we can recover as much organic waste as possible.

We compost at home/have a worm farm/have chickens. Do we still need to use the FOGO bin?

That's great! We encourage residents to compost and feed scraps to your worms and chooks at home. The FOGO bin can complement your compost heap as it can take the things that your compost heap can't - like weed seeds, excess lawn clippings and leaves, meat, bones, citrus and dairy products. Compost heaps need the right blend of 'green' and 'brown' materials so if you've got excess of one type, you can add it to the FOGO bin, knowing that it will still be composted. Branches that are too thick for the compost heap can also be put in the organics bin (up to 25mm diameter).

Worms can be fussy eaters and often do not like onions, citrus, eggshells and potato peels and there are some things chooks shouldn't be fed. You can add these things to the FOGO bin instead.

How do I remove the bio-insert from my FOGO bin?

Some households have a lime green lidded bin with a bio-insert that was designed to collect moisture in the bottom of the bin. Unfortunately, branches and sticks can wedge in the frame of the insert and prevent your garden waste from sliding out when picked up by the collection truck. Newer bins don't include the insert and are a lot less likely to get jammed.

To make sure food and garden waste slides out of the bin easily during clearance please check whether your bin has a bio-insert and, if it does, follow these simple steps:

1. Vents are attached to the frame inside the bin – In order to free them, give the vents a tap with a hammer on the outside of the bin or push them through using the handle of the hammer.
2. Once you have pushed all the vents inside the bin, lift the insert out in one piece.
3. Remove each of the vents on the insert by carefully cutting them off with a hacksaw or snips.
4. Snap the vents back into the bin using your hammer or a mallet.

Once you have removed the insert you can reuse it in the vegie garden as a trellis or drop it to Hanrahan Road Waste Facility for recycling – it must NOT go in your kerbside recycle bin.

If you need help to remove the insert please contact the City of Albany's Waste Team on fogo@albany.wa.gov.au or phone 6820 3000.

Need more information?

- Visit the waste pages on the City of Albany website: www.albany.wa.gov.au/waste
- Contact the Waste Team on 6820 3000 or email fogo@albany.wa.gov.au.