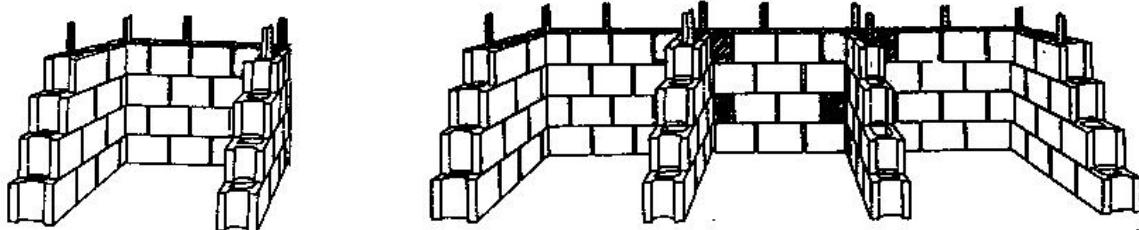


## Concrete-Block Compost Bin(s)

Concrete block can be used to make a 1, 2 or 3-bin compost unit. Block bins are durable, require few tools and can handle large amounts of yard materials. Growing vines around the outside of the bin(s) can soften the industrial appearance of this bin. These plans are for a 1 or 3-bin unit. To make a 2-bin unit, leave off section #3 of the 3-bin unit.

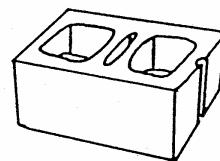
Block bins can be used as turning or holding bins. Turning will make compost much faster. There are two ways to use the 3 bin unit as a turning bins. One is to build a compost pile in one end section, transfer materials to the middle and then transfer again to third section. A second method is to build two compost piles, one in each end section. Transfer materials from one section to the middle section and back to original end section. Repeat process for the pile in the other end section.



 = concrete half blocks

	<u>1-Bin</u>	<u>3-Bin</u>
<b>Cost:</b>	<\$60	<\$110
<b>Capacity:</b>	Holds 10-12 30 gal bags of yard materials	Holds 30-38 30 gal bags of yard materials
<b>Materials:</b>	38 concrete blocks (8 " wide) 5 metal posts (4 ft. long)	86 concrete blocks (8" wide) 4 half concrete blocks (8" wide) 11 metal posts (4 ft. long) chisel  work gloves, level, shovel and hammer or mallet

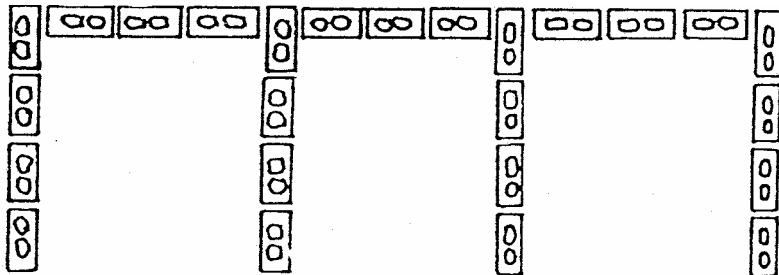
Half blocks can be purchased or split from full blocks. The illustration (right) shows a full concrete block with a central slit between the holes that makes it easy to split into two half blocks. Score each side of the block in the plane of the slit with a chisel. Then use the chisel and a hammer to split the block along the score.



### Construction Details:

1. Select bin site and level ground. Place concrete blocks on ground as shown in the illustration (reverse side of page). Use 11 blocks for 1 bin unit. Use 25 blocks for 3 bin unit. Leave about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch between each block to let in air.

2. Add a second layer of blocks, staggering them to increase stability.  
**Note** placement of 2 half blocks in 3 bin unit.
3. Add a third layer of blocks, again staggering the blocks to increase stability.
4. Add the last or top layer, staggering the blocks.  
**Note** placement of 2 half blocks in 3 bin unit.
5. To make the unit more stable, drive metal posts through the holes in the blocks as shown in diagram on front page.



**3-bin ground layer of concrete blocks**

Reprinted with permission from "Composting to Reduce the Waste Stream," January, 1991. Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Service, Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, NY 14853.  
Website: [www.nraes.org](http://www.nraes.org)

***Updated 2/2004 by Kathy Powell, SHWEC Adjunct Faculty***

## **For More Information, Contact Your County Extension Agent or SHWEC**

**SHWEC at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/shwec>**

<b>Green Bay</b>	<b>Madison</b>	<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>Stevens Point</b>
University of Wisconsin 2420 Nicolet Dr, MAC212 Green Bay WI 54311 920-465-2278 FAX 920-465-2376	UW Extension 610 Langdon St., Rm 528 Madison WI 53703 608-262-0385 FAX 608-262-6250	UWM UW-Extension 161 West Wisconsin Ave, Suite 6000 Milwaukee WI 53202 414-227-3160 FAX 414-227-3165	University of Wisconsin College of Natural Resources Stevens Point WI 54481 715-346-2793 FAX 715-346-3624