



Using an electric motor controlled by a timer, James Novacek rotates the drum automatically on his Garden Ways E-Z spin composter.

## Composter Drum Rotates Automatically

"Two years ago I bought a used Garden Ways E-Z spin composter from someone who had grown tired of using it. After I had used the machine for a couple of months I could see why. You had to remember to rotate the drum every day, which got old quickly, and if you forgot to do that for a couple of days you were left with clumpy, inconsistent compost. I decided to find a way to rotate the drum automatically, using an electric motor controlled by a timer," says James Novacek, David City, Neb.

He started with a 1/3 hp electric motor that he already had, and a 450 to 1 gear reduction box that he got from a friend. He built a metal frame to match the composter stand and mounted the motor and gear reduction box on it. The composter drum is made from heavy plastic, with three rods used to hold the ends together. He made a pair of light sheet metal plates and bolted them onto both ends of the drum to give the ends extra strength. He also welded a stub shaft onto each end of the drum, which now rides on pillow block bearings.

A hinged metal cover protects the motor and reduction box from the weather.

"A timer now takes care of turning the



Motor and gear reduction box mount on a metal frame attached to composter stand.

composter, which rotates at about 1 1/2 revolutions per minute, even when I'm not home," says Novacek. "I used scrap metal and other parts that I had laying around. My only expense was \$15 for the pillow block bearings and some 'refreshments' in exchange for the gear reduction box.

"My wife loves the compost for her potted plants, and it works great in our garden."

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## Easy-To-Make Composter

If you like the idea of having a small composter outside the back door to get rid of kitchen waste, but you don't want to spend hundreds of dollars for one, you'll like this simple design.

Kevin McConnell, extension director in Cocke County, Tennessee, came up with the idea as a way to teach composting to elementary students. It worked so well, other people are starting to copy it.

Even if you're not that interested in composting, McConnell points out that it's a good way to get rid of kitchen garbage, keeping it out of the septic system.

The simple rig consists of a 50-gal. plastic barrel mounted on a wood A-frame, with a galvanized pipe stuck all the way through lengthwise to act as an "axle".

Next, he cut a door in the side and mounted it on hinges with a door hasp. It doesn't have to be air tight. Two pieces of pvc pipe stick all the way through the barrel, extending out the sides to act as handles to make it easy to rotate the barrel.



Simple composter consists of a 50-gal. plastic barrel mounted on a wood A-frame, with a galvanized pipe serving as an axle.



Two pieces of pvc pipe serve as handles to make it easy to rotate the barrel.



Archie Wrubel turned a 1989 Ford Ranger pickup into this mini semi that's complete with a "dummy axle", a sleeper, and a pair of stainless steel exhaust pipes.

## Ford Ranger Converted Into Mini Semi With Sleeper Cab

This mini semi was built around a 1989 Ford Ranger pickup. With a full-size wind deflector, air horns, dual CB radio antennae, stainless steel full moon hubcaps on tandem axle wheels, a pair of stainless steel exhaust pipes, and more than 30 running lights all the way around, it gets noticed right away wherever it goes.

Archie Wrubel, Carsonville, Mich., drives the rig to go to car shows and also shows it off in parades. He can bunk down in the sleeper cab whenever he needs rest.

The Ford Ranger's 4-cyl. engine with 3-speed manual transmission was blown. To get the pickup running again, Wrubel replaced the bad engine with a 350 cu. in., 295 hp V-8 with automatic transmission out of a Chevrolet van. He also fabricated new motor mounts.

He removed the pickup box. To make room for the sleeper, he added 34 in. to the back of the frame, welding in new sheet metal onto the frame rails and installing brackets for a metal floor. Then he moved the pickup's original rear axle back 22 in. He also added a "dummy axle" behind it that's off another Ford Ranger.

He bought the sleeper at a junkyard for \$100 and cut it down to fit the pickup. The sleeper mounts on rubber bushings.

It measures 36 in. deep, 6 ft. wide, and 5 ft. high and came equipped with a door on each side. To make the sleeper, he cut the entire bottom part off and cut 10 in. off both sides. Then he cut 13 in. off the remaining

center section and welded the sides back on. He also removed the rear window from the pickup cab, so that the window opening matches up with a window that was on front of the sleeper.

He cut the center out of the full-size wind deflector to make it fit, then glued it back together.

He installed a pair of Thrush mufflers under the sleeper and hooked them up to a pair of 3 1/2-in. dia. stainless steel exhaust pipes that extend 2 ft. above the sleeper. The pipes ride inside wrap-around sheet metal brackets that bolt on back of the sleeper and provide protection against burns. The pipes are equipped with flappers off a farm tractor.

He bought two air tanks to use for gas tanks, which are secured by stainless steel bands that support metal steps. Each tank holds 22 gal. of gas. He also installed fenders designed for a tandem axle trailer, and he even added a fifth wheel hitch.

"People have trouble believing I was able to fit the 350 cu. in. Chevy engine into such a small pickup. I tell them I can do anything I want as long as I have a welder and torch. There was just enough space to fit the new engine in.

"The Thrush mufflers make a beautiful humming sound that turns a lot of heads. It sounds like a semi truck going down the road."

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## Self-Propelled Square Baler

The self-propelled Freeman Baler is back on the market and better than ever. Powered by a fuel-efficient 115 hp Deere engine, the baler makes three-tie, 16 by 22-in. bales. The self-propelled version was unavailable for seven or eight years. Now owned by Allied Systems, the self-propelled baler line has been reinvigorated with a new spacious cab.

The engine features a computer-controlled injection system, digital readouts for in-cab diagnostics and three-stage electronic throttle for idle, baling speed and transport. The hydrostatic ground drive offers infinite ground speeds from 0 to 17 mph.

The baler features a 160 hp hydraulic drive motor and in-cab electronic speed control for slower speeds at headlands without lowering engine rpm. This ensures consistent bale formation while saving fuel and maximizing ground drive. Baler drive cutout protects the baler from over speeding when the engine is in transport mode.

The cab offers a fully adjustable air ride seat with operator presence safety switch, adjustable steering and air conditioning.



Freeman Baler is powered by a fuel-efficient 115 hp Deere engine and has a new spacious cab.

List price on the new baler starts at \$150,000. Options include an on-board moisture sensor and a four-color on-board closed circuit LCD screen with a camera that can be placed for viewing the knotter or the pickup.

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