

WHAT ROTS AND WHAT DOESN'T?



Choose a few different materials (at least one should be an organic, such as a piece of fruit or a vegetable). You will need three identical pieces of each and place them in the three scenarios in the chart below: Open air, buried in soil, preserved in salt.

**Then record your observations at 1 week and 2 weeks time.
Create one chart for each material you choose.**

Material:

Open Air

Describe after 1 week:

Describe after 2 weeks:

Buried in Soil

Describe after 1 week:

Describe after 2 weeks:

Preserved in Salt

Describe after 1 week:

Describe after 2 weeks:

What Rots and What Doesn't

What to expect from different materials.

Material:	Will it Rot?	How long will it last?
Rock/Stone	No	Forever
Wood	Yes	1-3 Years*
Plastic	Yes	450 Years*
Leathers/fabrics	Yes	2-5 months*
Animal Bones	Yes	Varies greatly 10 - thousands of years
Foods	Yes	A few weeks*
Burnt Foods	No	Forever**
Glass	No	Forever***

*in most conditions

**Burnt foods are altered by the burning process into pure carbon. Carbon will eventually break down and decay but it will take approx. 11 000 years. However, this will only happen if its buried and sealed away from all the carbon in the atmosphere around us.

***Glass doesn't decay, but it does develop a metallic sheen. The process that causes this can be used to help tell how old the glass is.