

# Heterotroph Encyclopedia Article

## Heterotroph

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# Heterotroph

A heterotroph is an organism that derives its nutritional **carbon** and energy by oxidizing (i.e., decomposing) organic materials. The higher animals, **fungi**, actinomycetes, and most bacteria are heterotrophs. These are the biological consumers that eventually decompose most of the organic matter on the earth. The **decomposition** products then are available for chemical or biological **recycling**.

## See Also

Oxidation Reduction Reactions