



How to make a worm farm

Household waste

Almost half of household waste is organic and compostable. Recycling your organic waste can be done by using a worm farm or compost bin.

Worms are amazing creatures, and worm farms are a great way to reduce household waste and produce fertiliser for your plants and garden.

Worms turn organic waste into a rich fertiliser to feed your garden.

Worms in your worm farm can eat up to 3-4kg of your kitchen waste each week. The worm farm then turns this waste into worm poo (castings) rich plant food and worm tea (liquid fertiliser).

Set up a worm farm

Commercial worm farms can be purchased from a hardware store or online. You can build your own worm farm by using 3 Styrofoam boxes that are the same size. This works the same as the purchased ones.

Making your own worm farm

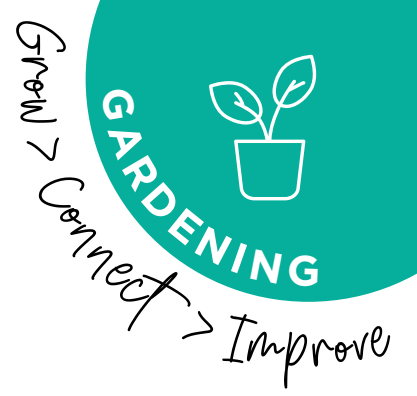
The bottom box needs to be water tight, as this collects the worm tea and excess water. The other two boxes need to have 6 to 8 square holes in them. To prevent the worms from falling through the holes place some hessian or shade cloth over the holes. The worms will need some bedding in the middle box, this can be purchased as worm bedding or you can use some compost (mushroom or garden) and a small amount of garden soil.

Once the middle box is full, add the next box and a layer of bedding, with some food. The worms will move into this box and leave the castings in the middle box. Ensure you have at least 1 lid to cover the worm farm.





Week Twenty



Using a commercial worm farm kit

The worm farms that can be purchased from any hardware store or online have at least two trays and a tap at the bottom. This is where the worm tea is collected. The top tray is where the organic scraps go, and the worms move within this tray. The bottom tray collects the worm castings and the worm tea.

Set up the trays according to the directions, there should be a bedding block that will expand when soaked in water. Spread the bedding block on the bottom tray and add your new pets, the worms. Add the top tray fill it with kitchen scraps and wait for the worms to now do their work.

Farming the worms

Ensure there is a layer of shade cloth or hessian on top under the lid

Place the worm farm in shade and cover with a hessian blanket to protect it from the hot and cold. Try and control the temperature within around 20 - 24 degrees Celsius, this will improve the overall performance of the worm farm.

Keep the worm farm damp, as worms will need some water from time to time to ensure the bedding is moist.

It is best to leave the tap open with a bucket underneath. This will collect the worm tea. Dilute the tea with water and use as a liquid fertilizer. The worm poo (castings) is also a great nutrient-packed food for your garden. These castings will generally drop to the bottom tray: remove and feed to your plants.

The worms

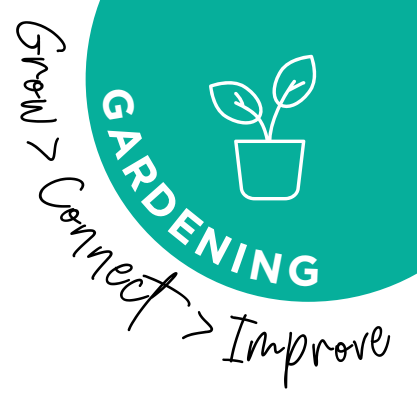
Ordinary earth worms you find in your soil are not suitable worms for your worm farm. They need to be a specific breed (species). These worms are available at hardware stores. The suggested number of compost worms to begin with is 1,000.

Within a few months the worm farm will be up and running producing fertiliser you can use in your garden. You will also have lots of worms, which you can share with your friends when they start their own worm farm.





Week Twenty



What do worms eat?

- Fruit and Vegetable scraps and peelings
- Tea leaves/coffee grounds
- Crushed eggs shells (these help with PH balance and also encourage the worms to lay more eggs)
- Small pieces of damp newspapers, egg cartons
- Very limited lawn clippings - I suggest not to use if you can
- What not to feed worms
- Onion skins
- Citrus
- Dairy foods
- Meat and Fish
- Garlic

Let your worms advise you how much to feed them; if you are adding more than they can eat you are adding too much.

The food should be clean and if it goes mouldy you need to remove this, the worms won't eat mouldy food.

Occasionally add a handful of soil.

