

# Composting

## SIMPLE STEPS

### IT'S NATURAL!

COMPOSTING - SIMPLE STEPS TO TAKE

Before You Start ...

#### 1. Find a suitable place

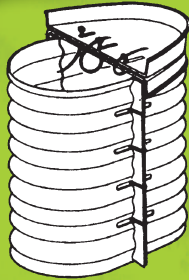
One square metre of ground space in a warm, mostly sunny place is a good place for your compost.

#### 2. Decide whether to use a bin or make a heap

Either option will give you compost. If space is tight, or you want to keep everything nice and neat, use a bin.

#### 3. Organise a household bucket or container

To collect your food scraps, coffee dregs, used tea bags etc. Then simply empty it onto your compost pile.



## Organic material makes great compost

- Air is important for good composting. Turn or 'fluff' your compost regularly with a garden fork to improve aeration in your compost heap.
- "Aliveness" is a sign of healthy compost. When it's alive, your compost will have living organisms like worms, beetles and other microbes all busy doing the hard work for you.
- When your bin or heap is full, give it a final 'fluff' and then let it mature before putting it on the garden (about 4-6 weeks).

## LET'S GET STARTED

1. Make a bottom layer of coarse material (eg. sticks, twigs) for better aeration.

2. Build your compost in thin layers (5-8cm). For each layer of kitchen scraps make the next layer one of the following:

- grass clippings;
- coarse material;
- shredded newspaper;
- wood ash, dolomite or garden lime;
- soil or compost;
- chicken or cow manure;
- fresh herbs eg. Comfry.

Feeding your compost a varied diet builds in diversity.

3. Water your compost from time to time. Compost needs moisture. Covering your compost with material such as carpet, hessian or underfelt will help to keep it warm and damp and this helps the composting process.

Shoalhaven City Council sells Compost Bins & Worm Farms (not including worms) made from recycled plastic.

These can be purchased from:

- Shoalhaven City Council Office,**  
Bridge Road, Nowra.
- Shoalhaven City Council Office,**  
Deering Street, Ulladulla.

For further information please contact:  
Waste Management Unit,  
PO Box 42,  
Bridge Road, Nowra 2541  
or call us direct on the waste hotline:

**Ph: 4429 3374**

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# Worm Farming & Composting

## A Practical Guide



# Worm Farming



Worms farms are a great way to recycle and reuse your kitchen and household organic waste.

## Why Worms?

Worms can eat organic matter equal to their own body weight in 24 hours! Your ordinary garden worms (earth workers) will not do too well in your worm farm because the worms in your gardens do not like the constant, moist, warm conditions found in your worm farm. There are three species of worms that do enjoy those conditions. They are "Tiger", "Red" and "Indian Blue" worms. Your local worm farmer or nursery may be able to supply these for you.

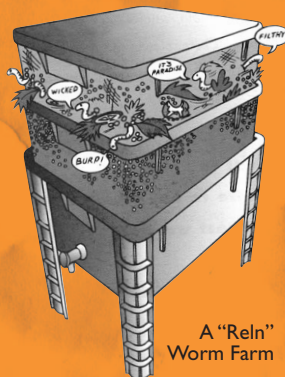
## Benefits from Worms

Worm farms reduce the amount of organic waste in your garbage bin.

Worms produce 'castings'. This is the non-toxic, odourless bi-product of the worm's digestive system, or worm manure.

The castings, when used on your garden:

- improve the aeration and drainage of clay soils when dug in,
- increase the water-holding capacity of the soil,
- provide nutrients to the soil,
- increase the bacterial activity in the soil and can act as a slow-release fertiliser.



A "ReIn" Worm Farm

## Where else can I use the castings?

The castings are your garden's best friend. You can use them all around the garden. Why not try them:

- in pot plants;
- around trees and shrubs;
- in the vegie patch;
- on your lawns.

## Worms also produce a liquid...

This can be used on your plants either by watering it in or by spraying it directly on the foliage.

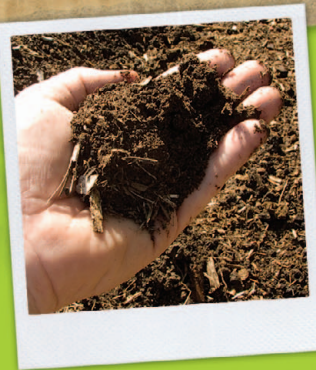


## Where should you place your Worm Farm?

Worm farms ideally should be placed in a cool dark area of your garden. Worms prefer a moist environment, so you need to keep the worm farm damp, but too much water can drown the worms. Remember, they get a lot of moisture from the food scraps you place in the farm.

Have Fun making your Worm Farm!

# Composting



The most recent survey of what we throw away shows that nearly half of our waste is organic.

It is either plant or vegetable material; or items made from something once living - paper, cotton or wool.

## What is Compost?

Compost is nature's own plant and soil food formed by the natural process of decomposition.

## Compost - Friendly Facts

- Compost is easy to make, you don't have to be an expert;
- You don't need any special equipment to make compost;
- Making compost is a way to do something positive
  - for the environment;
  - for your soil and plants;
  - to reduce the amount of waste we currently dispose of to landfill.

## A WORM'S DIET

### They will eat:

- animal manure (well aged) (like chicken, cow or horse manure);
- household organic waste such as fruit and vegie scraps, tea leaves and coffee grounds;
- crushed egg shells;
- shredded paper, hair, cotton and linen;
- hay, straw, leaf litter and grass cuttings.

### They don't like:

- large quantities of citrus, onions and garlic;
- organic material that you think may have been exposed to chemicals or pesticides;
- soil;
- meat;
- pet poo (eg. cat, dog)

Worms like a varied diet. They prefer small serves of fresh waste rather than large serves.

