

Worm Farming

A Happy Worm is an Active Worm!

10 Tips for Maintaining a Productive Worm Farm

- 1 Check the moisture levels of your worm farm regularly. The bedding should be damp but not soggy.
- 2 Keep the air vents free of obstructions. Good air flow will stimulate worm activity.
- 3 Don't expose the worms to too much heat. Position your worm farm away from the afternoon sun.
- 4 Feed your worms regularly. Worms will eat most vegetable and fruit scraps, tea bags, coffee grounds, pasta, rice, and small quantities of garden waste.
- 5 Avoid feeding your worms meat, seafood or large quantities of orange peels.
- 6 Check the collector tray at least once a week or after rain. Some worms may fall through to the bottom tray and may drown if not saved!
- 7 Cover the top layer of food with a sheet of damp newspaper, cardboard or hessian. This will discourage insects and will help keep the worm farm damp, dark and cosy.
- 8 Once a month, put your gloves on and fluff up the castings. This will help maintain good drainage and airflow.
- 9 Your worm farm will require extra attention during heat waves. It is important to maintain a damp and cool environment for your worms during periods of prolonged heat.
- 10 When going away on holidays make sure you feed your worms a little extra food and leave the collector tray tap open so worms don't drown.



Did You Know?

- Worms will NOT eat anything that is alive.
- Worms turn dead organic material into castings (worm manure).
- Worm castings are pH neutral.
- Worms don't have eyes.
- Worms comprise almost entirely of water and breathe through the pores in their skin.
- Worms are hermaphrodites – they have both male and female reproductive organs.
- Compost worms are different to earth worms! The common compost worms are tiger worms, indian blues and red wigglers.
- Worm farms can be used for recycling animal manures.

How to Worm Farm

*You will need a Worm Farm,
Worms and Worm Bedding!*

Commercially manufactured worm farms can be purchased from nurseries, hardware stores and the internet. Or you can build your own worm farm from wooden, polystyrene or plastic boxes.

You will need about 1000 worms to get your worm farm started. Worms can be purchased from nurseries, hardware stores or direct from local worm farmers – look under “Worms” in the Yellow Pages.

Worms are usually supplied in bedding, but if not, you can use the coconut fibre brick supplied with your worm farm. Simply soak the brick in water as per the instructions and drain off excess water.

Step 1

Find a spot for your worm farm

The location of your worm farm is very important. A convenient shady environment sheltered from afternoon sun and heavy rainfall is ideal.

Step 2

Set up your worm farm

Worm farms usually have several trays. The trays with holes in the bottom are the working trays and the tray without holes is the collector tray for the liquid fertiliser.

- To start off, you will only need to use one working tray positioned over the collector tray.
- Place a sheet of damp newspaper in the working tray and cover with a layer of bedding and worms.
- Place a small amount of fruit and vegetable scraps on top.
- Cover the worms with a damp sheet of newspaper or hessian.
- Place the lid on the worm farm.

Step 3

Feed your worms

You can start feeding your worms straight away. Place your food scraps directly onto the worm bedding. Always keep the food scraps covered with a layer of moist paper or hessian. A dusting of lime or dolomite over the food from time to time will help reduce acidity and deter pests such as mites, vinegar flies, maggots and ants.

Step 4

Harvest worm castings

After several months the worms will have converted their original bedding and your food scraps into castings. Remove the castings from the tray and place them in a cone shape onto a flat surface in a well lit area. Slowly scrape the castings away from the surface while the worms burrow inwards away from the light. Repeat this until you have separated the worms from the castings. Place the worms back into your worm farm. The harvested castings are ready to be used in your garden. Castings are pH neutral (7) and suitable for most types of plants.

