

Wormery

What is it?

Wormery composting is a method of turning kitchen waste and small amounts of garden waste into nutrient-rich compost and a concentrated liquid fertiliser.

How would it work?

You can buy a wormery compost bin or make your own¹. A wormery can take up to 3.5kg food waste per week and produce compost in 3 months.

Keeping your wormery healthy

Once you have a wormery, three important things you need to do to keep it healthy:

- **Choose sheltered site** Worms do best in a constant temperature, not too hot or too cold. A shady spot is best (15 – 25°C is ideal).
- **Keep it moist** A healthy worm bin should be damp (like a squeezed out flannel) not dry or wet. Water lightly if it gets too dry. Add more paper and card if too wet.
- **Feed it well** Feeding is where things can most easily go wrong when you're starting out. Here are the four golden rules:

- **Little at first.** When starting your wormery, feed it carefully and patiently while the worms breed. It's better to add too little food than too much.

- **Add 20-30% 'brown matter'** - that's cardboard, newspaper or wood chips.

- **Don't add any one ingredient in large quantities**

- **Feed it a varied diet.** This will help create a healthy wormery and a rich worm compost full of nutrients and trace elements.

What are the costs and benefits?

100L wormery composter costs around £75, less if you make one yourself. (you can use recycled plastic box and buy worms (about £15 for a 100L wormery)).

Wormery composters do not take much space, do not smell and makes compost faster than conventional composters.



More tips for a healthy wormery

When you lift the lid of your wormery, can you see a few worms scouting round the surface? If yes, it needs feeding. If not, wait until you do. Usually you'll find they need feeding once or twice a week.

The wormery should smell sweet and healthy. An unpleasant smell is a sign that something is wrong. The two most common causes of a bad smell are:

- overfeeding leading to food rotting
- adding too much food waste and too little "brown matter".

If you are running a wormery as a group or community, you'll want to think about ways to let each other know who has done what and when, so that the worms stay happy and healthy.



Source:

1. <http://www.verticalveg.org.uk/how-to-make-your-own-wormery/>