

Your step-by-step guide to composting with a wormery - it's easier than you think

So you've got your new wormery,
what next?

Step 1 – Find the right site

Standing your wormery on top of something will give you easier access to the tap for draining liquid. This can be as simple as putting a few bricks under the base.

Keep your wormery wherever is most convenient. Most people keep it outside near the back door, in the garden shed or garage. Or you could keep it in the kitchen or utility room. It's a good idea to keep it near the kitchen so you don't have to walk too far with those kitchen scraps.



Step 2 – Settling your worms in

The first thing you need to do to is to half fill your wormery with suitable bedding. This can be bought but you can also make your own using leafmould, compost, newspaper, card and/or well rotted sawdust. The bedding needs to be well watered so it doesn't dry out.

You are now ready to add the worms. Allow two or three days for them to settle in.

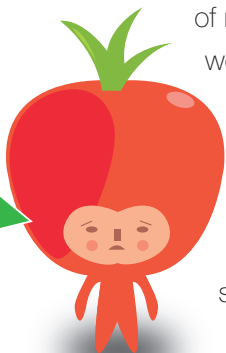


Step 3 – Add the right ingredients

Add little bits of food, often, so that the breakdown of material does not create too much heat for the worms. They can get through about half of their body weight of food a day.

Fruit and vegetable scraps are ideal. They also eat paper and cardboard. Try to avoid fat, oil and meat scraps as well as citrus, garlic and onion.

**Step 3:
Add the right
ingredients**



Step 4 – Looking after your wormery

Wormeries do not need a lot of looking after but if you follow a few simple pointers it will make sure that your wormery is as effective as possible and that your worms stay alive:

Keep it at the right temperature. The worms are most active between 10 and 30 degrees Celsius (in ideal conditions they can double their population every three months or so). You don't need to strictly control the temperature but try some of the following:

- in the winter you could move your wormery into the house, shed or garage, or cover it with a blanket

- if your wormery is indoors do not sit it against a radiator
- in the summer it's a good idea to move your wormery into partial shade - worms will die if they become too hot.

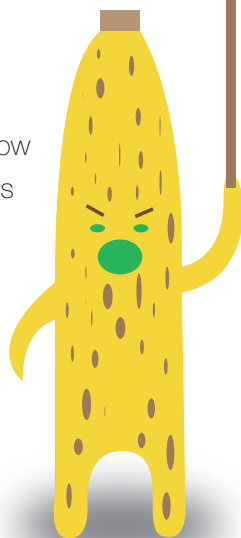
If your compost becomes dry, sprinkle or spray some water over the compost. Don't drench it, but some excess water won't harm, it will run through and increase your supply of liquid fertiliser!

Remember - be patient. Your worms will probably take around a year to completely settle in as they breed. At this stage they will probably number between 15,000 and 20,000.

Make sure you regularly drain the liquid from your wormery. If you don't it will drown the worms and create a nasty smell. Draining will provide you with an incredible liquid fertiliser to use on plants.

Make sure to dilute your liquid (using at least ten parts water to one of the fertiliser) and then put it on plants, vegetables and flowers.

**Step 4: Looking
after your wormery**



How long will it take?

Within about eight weeks you'll be tapping off liquid feed. Most people wait until their wormery is nearly full before emptying the compost, it typically takes nine to 12 months to have a bin mostly full of rich organic compost. The Original Wormery will deal with the typical food waste of a family of four - about 75% of what goes in comes out as liquid feed.