

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN WORM FARM



Cost effective worm farming

Polystyrene worm farms have been around for many years and are a great cost effective alternative to a commercially designed worm farm.

Steps



Use three polystyrene boxes, you can often find these for free. Polystyrene is non-toxic and a good insulator, which is perfect for worms as they need to be kept cool and protected from frost.

Start your worm farm with two boxes, and add the third one once the worm farm is established (see step 7).

1 The bottom box (box 1) of your worm farm needs to be water tight to capture worm tea for your garden, so make sure it has no cracks or holes in it.

2 The next box (box 2) needs holes in the bottom for drainage, which you can easily (and carefully!) make with a butter knife. Making the holes this way allows drainage, but creates narrow holes that prevent the worms falling through and drowning.



3 Once box 2 is prepared, stack it on top of the box 1, placing a layer of shade cloth between, to ensure the worms cannot fall through to the bottom layer.

4 Add worm bedding: Purchase a bedding block from your local hardware or garden shop or prepare your own bedding from hay, coconut fibre, shredded cardboard or paper. You will need enough bedding to fill about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the box. Worm bedding is a long term food source for the worms and helps keep conditions in the worm farm balanced. In fact, up to 50% of a worm's diet may consist of its bedding.

5

Add at least 1000 worms. The worms you use in worm farms are different to the ones you find in your garden, so you'll need to purchase worms to get started. They are available online or from local hardware stores, just make sure you check how long the worms have been on the shelf, as fresher worms will usually be healthier! Visit <https://www.campbelltown.nsw.gov.au/ServicesandFacilities/WasteandRecycling/Otherwaystorecycle/Compostingandwormfarming> to find local suppliers.



6

Poke holes in the lid for ventilation and use another piece of shade cloth between the worm farm and lid to keep out fruit flies.

7

In a few months when box 2 is full, prepare the box 3. You will need to create larger drainage holes for this box, then prepare the bedding as you did at step 4. Remove the lid from box 2 and place box 3 on top, this time without the shade cloth between the boxes, then replace the lid on box 3. The worms will travel to box 3 to feed and you can collect worm castings from box 2 to use on the garden.



Food Scraps

Worms come up from soil to eat scraps and will turn this into compost

Soil and shredded paper

Worm castings which are great to fertilise your garden

