

Building a Worm Bin

Wiggle E. Worm



Riverside County Waste Management Department

14310 Frederick Street, Moreno Valley, CA 92553

(951) 486-3200 or (800) 366-SAVE

www.rivcowm.org

Making a Worm Bin

A. Materials Needed:

1. 2 ea. Covered opaque plastic containers with lids that will hold approximately 5 to 20 gallons. EXAMPLES: Any 5 gallon bucket (do not use paint buckets), up to 20 gallon storage bins.
2. 1 lb. of Red Wiggler Worms

NOTE: Unless you have a ready source of Red Wiggler worms you might want to order your worms now. You can purchase your worms by calling or going on line to the California Integrated Waste Management Board. Their phone number is (916) 341-6000. Their web site is www.ciwmb.ca.gov . Another resource may be a bait shop.

3. Window screen (fiberglass or aluminum)
4. Glue gun with all purpose glue
5. Electric drill with ½” and 1” spade bits
6. **Remember to take all necessary safety precautions when using the tools**

B. Building the Worm Bin. (One bucket or bin will remain unchanged and will serve as a reservoir for the worm tea)

1. On one of the buckets or bins drill (3) 1” holes about 2” apart on each side of the container. These holes are for aeration.



2. Turn this bucket or bin over and drill (4) to (12) ½” holes about 4” apart on the bottom of the container. The number of holes depends on the size of the bin. These holes are for drainage.



3. Cut a piece of the window screen into (6) 2” square pieces. Hot glue these pieces on the outside of the holes on the sides of the container.



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4. Cut another piece of window screen into (4) to (12) 1” square pieces. Hot glue these pieces on the outside of the holes on the bottom of the container.



- C. Bedding provides the Red Wiggler worms with a cool, moist environment they need to thrive. The Red Wiggler worms will travel through and digest the bedding along with the food scraps to produce vermicompost. The Red Wiggler worms will not crawl out of the bin unless it becomes too dry or too wet.
1. Material Needed (The bedding can consist of any of the following items)
 - a. Finished compost
 - b. Shredded newspaper or cardboard
NOTE: When using newspaper you might want to use rubber gloves to keep the newspaper ink off your hands.
 - c. Peat moss
 - d. Compressed coconut pith fiber called Coir block.
 - e. Manures: If using fresh horse or cow manures make sure they were not recently de-wormed. When using hot manure such as chicken or rabbit make sure that they have been aged for about three months before using.
 - f.
 2. Preparing the bedding.
NOTE: Bedding should form a layer at least 3” thick.
 - a. Finished compost and peat moss should be moist already. If they are not moist sprinkle them with water to add moisture to make them the consistency of a wet rung out sponge.
 - b. Shredded newspaper and cardboard need to be placed in a 5 gallon bucket with water to soak for about 5 minutes. At the end of that time wring the water out of the newspaper or cardboard and fluff them back up.
 - c. Coir block requires a 5 gallon bucket 1/3 full of warm water. Place the Coir block in the warm water for about 30 minutes. This will cause the coir block to expand. Now place the expanded material into your bin and let it drain for about 15 minutes. Once it has drained empty the water from the bottom bin into your garden.

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D. Adding the worms into the bedding

Now that you have prepared the bedding, you are ready to add the worms. Lay the worms on top of the bedding and let them migrate into the bedding on their own (to get away from the light). Leave the bin uncovered for 20 minutes. Any worms that are on top are either dead or dying and should be placed in your garden as fertilizer. Lastly, take a piece of remnant carpet or several layers of wet newspaper, and place them on top of the bedding as a cover that will allow the worms to come to the food and eat. This added layer will decrease evaporation, allow the worms to feed easily, and detour gnats from food scraps

Worm and Worm Box Suppliers

(Source: California Integrated Waste Management Board
<http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Organics/Worms>)

References

Worms Eat My Garbage

by Mary Appelhof

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