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# Kitchen Composting Using Worms

1. Use a plastic container approximately 12" x 16" x 10" deep (minimum) or larger with a lid. For air circulation, drill 8-10 holes in the bottom, small enough so that insects are not encouraged to crawl inside. No holes are needed in the lid.
2. Purchase a hard plastic light diffuser with 1/2" square grids at a hardware store. Cut to fit the container and place on the bottom, allowing an area for moisture to gather so the worms won't drown.
3. Place 1 1/2" of foam rubber over the diffuser to absorb moisture. Add a 4-5" layer of shredded newspaper. Cover with a thin (1/2") layer of dirt. Add 50-100 Red Wiggler worms since these are the worms that eat kitchen waste. Purchase at fishing supply stores. Place a plastic tray underneath the bin to catch any moisture that might collect.
4. If soil is dry, add 1/2 cup of water. Add no more than 2 cups of finely chopped wet kitchen waste. (NOTE: Keep extra kitchen waste in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for future use. Avoid meat products, oils, fats, or dairy.)
5. The worms should eat the wet materials in one week. To be sure, check for 2 or 3 weeks. Add fresh kitchen waste once a week by pushing dirt aside to make a slight indentation. Cover with dirt. Remove any large pieces of material to prevent odors.
6. The compost will be ready to use in 3 months. **Please Note:** This compost is extremely fertile. Do NOT use alone. Add to potting soil, approximately one handful per 4" pot. Or 1 cup to 1 gallon of water for liquid food.
7. Gently strain out the worms using a soil screen, a kitchen strainer, a scoop, or lift out by hand. Pick out the largest worms. Put in small containers with some dirt to help friends begin worm composting! (They must be fed.) Put the worm eggs and small worms back in the worm bed.
8. To use this composting method outdoors, temperatures must remain above freezing. Also, worms **must** be kept cool. Lay a piece of wet carpet or old bedspread under and over the box. Keep in a shady place. In colder climates, basements work very well.
9. Children love to keep worms. And all the kitchen waste gets recycled, instead of going down the drain, which saves money because most folks have to pay sewer fees!

**These instructions are adequate for a two-person household. The container fits under the kitchen sink.**

*1-93 lhl*