

## Green Oceanside's Do-It-Yourself Vermicompost Bins

The beauty of composting with worms (vermicomposting) is that these little decomposers don't care about the container they live in. You can easily make your own DIY vermicompost bin with a few basic tools and materials you can pick-up at your local hardware store, or possibly already have on hand. By making your own vermicompost bin, you can really show how to be zero waste at home!

### Materials Needed:

- Two plastic or rubber storage bins solid color or opaque, with one lid
  - Ex. 7 gallon tough storage bin, hard plastic empty cat litter container, or other plastic containers with a removal lid.
  - The bins should be able to rest inside each other.
- Power drill with 1/8 or 1/4 drill bit
- Vinyl screen or mesh
- Waterproof glue
- Shredded paper
- Coconut coir, sand, or finely ground egg shells
- Wooden blocks or bricks (optional)



### Instructions:

- **Start drilling.** Take one of the plastic bins and drill 15-25 holes throughout the bottom of the bin to ensure that the worm leachate can drain from the bottom. Drill 7-10 holes on each side of the bin, near the top. Drill 15-20 holes along the lid to ensure adequate access to oxygen for the worms.



- **Keep the worms in.** Cut the mesh to fit along the bottom of the bin, and glue mesh with the waterproof glue along the bottom to keep the worms from escaping.
- **Storing inside.** Don't drill any holes in the second bin or tray that the first bin will fit inside. You will fit the drilled bin inside this outer bin to capture the worm seepage, known as leachate. Place a wooden block or brick at the bottom of your outer bin to raise and keep the drilled bin above the

drained liquid. Be sure to empty the leachate at least once every other day to keep the solution from becoming toxic. Dilute the leachate with plenty of water before adding to any gardens, and don't add directly to plants or roots.

- **Storing outside.** If you store your bin outside in a shaded spot with direct access to soil or turf, you don't need the second bin. Instead the leachate will naturally filter into the ground, to the benefit of the landscape.



- **Bedding.** Add shredded paper (corrugated cardboard or newspaper work great) at least 3 inches deep, adding more paper when you feed the worms. Hydrated coconut coir helps keep the right moisture level for your vermicompost bins. Mix in a handful of sand, soil, or ground eggs shells create "grit" to help the worms digest the food scraps.

**Now your bin is ready to compost with worms!**