

# Here's how to make a difference - Recycling Options

## Council Community Composting

An ideal recycling solution for people who live in units or with other space constraints is community composting. Council's often offer a community composting program. They ask residents to collect their food scraps and transport them to their local composting hub for composting. Community hubs are run by local garden volunteers, they're a great place to mix and mingle and to learn more about composting and using compost to grow more.

## Bokashi Composting

A Bokashi bucket allows you to capture all kitchen food waste including meat, fish and dairy, cooked, raw and



transform food scraps into nutrient rich compost. It's a two-step process of diverting food scraps into the Bokashi bucket, fermenting and burying to complete the composting process. Here's how it's done:

Sprinkle the Bokashi One Mix over the collected food waste, layer by layer. The mix is dried wheat and rice bran imbued with microorganisms. The microorganisms work to ferment the food waste. The Bokashi Bucket has an airtight lid, make sure this is closed. Bokashi fermentation is an anaerobic process (without oxygen).

Drain off any liquid through the tap at the base of the bucket. The liquid tea can be used as a soil supplement. When the bucket is full, dig a hole in the garden and bury. Complete breakdown of the waste and the compost process occurs when it's buried in the soil. For more info, check out the links provided in the links section.

## Worm Farms

Why not let worms do the composting for you. Worm farms don't have the same food waste capacity as a composter and are well suited to small households of 2 to 3 people. The worm farms take up little space and are easily managed. Easiest way to get started is to buy a commercially made worm, matting for the farm and a box of worms. You'll need a sheltered space to keep your farm to protect your worms from the elements. Keep them warm in winter and cool and away from direct sunlight in summer.

The worm farm usually has several layers, and each layer is used differently by the worms. Bottom layer collects the worm wee, upper layers are for living and eating.

Worms are a bit particular about what they like to eat:

FEED WORMS	DON'T FEED WORMS
Fruit and vegie scraps	Onion
Teabags and coffee grounds	garlic
Crushed eggshells	chilli
Small amounts of bread or pasta	dairy
Moist shredded cardboard and newspaper,	Citrus fruits
	Meat and bones
	fish
	Oil or grease

And a bit particular about how their food is served:

- They like it small. The smaller the pieces, the faster the worms will get through them. Blending food works, a worm smoothie anyone?
- They like a little. A few handfuls every few days. Uneaten food can attract unwanted pests.

Output:

Worm wee – open the tap and drain into your collection vessel. Dilute the liquid 1 part worm wee, to seven parts water and use as a liquid fertilizer on your plants.

Worm poo (castings) Castings take around six months to accumulate. Scrape away the top level and harvest the rich dark castings and use as soil conditioner in your garden.

## Composting



Don't throw those food scraps in the general waste bin, throw them into your composter and let your garden reap the rewards.

Here's how to do it:

Choose a composting method which works best for you, two choices, continuous or batch composting. Continuous works for most households with a steady stream of food waste. Add food waste on an on-going basis, mixing old with new. As your bin fills stop adding to it for the last few weeks so the newest

material can finish breaking down too.

Batch composting works well if you have a large amount of organic material, with enough to fill a bin at a time. Leave it to compost. Whilst the first batch is composting, start your second bin of compost.

Compost bins are intended to be placed outside in a space where odour isn't going to be a nuisance.

There are a variety of compost bins available including single composters with a single chamber for continuous composting, or multiple chamber composters for staggered batches of compost. The single chambers are generally cheaper and more common, and the big single chamber is good for generating heat. Downside is once you've filled your bin you must wait for it to compost before you can empty it.

If you want to speed up the composting process, add airflow. Most composters have air vents, and work by convection. As the hot air generated by the composting process rises, fresh air is pulled in from below, but the airflow doesn't penetrate much beyond the surface of the compost. The traditional method to aerate the compost involves elbow grease and a pitchfork.

Want to take some of the labour out of composting, treat yourself to a tumbling composter bin.

Compost bins do make life in the suburbs easier, but if you have more space you may prefer to compost on the ground in open pens. The enclosed compost bins have the advantage of sheltering your compost from the weather and not attracting insects and pests, which is not the case with the open compost pile. If you're keen to upscale to pens, I've included a link to how to build a compost pile in the links section.

Getting the blend right:

GREENS – Nitrogen rich	BROWNS – Carbon Rich
Fresh cut grass	Newspaper
Weeds	Cardboard
Kitchen Scraps	Straw
Green leaves	Dried leaves
Seaweed	Old Hay
Hair/fur	Paper towel
Coffee grounds	Sawdust
manures	Wood ash

Carbon to nitrogen ratio (or brown to green ratio). Add organics waste in a ratio of three browns to one green. So, for every bucket of green waste, add three to four buckets of brown waste. (Paper and cardboard are best shredded)

### What not to compost

Pet waste, coloured newspaper, meat, dairy products, plastic, oil, waxed cardboard, large pieces of wood, weed seeds

## Helpful Links:

Brisbane City Council Composting Program: <https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/environment-waste/be-clean-green-brisbane/green-homes/sustainable-gardening/compost-organic-waste-recycling/compost/community-composting>

### Bokashi

<http://www.bokashi.com.au/Bokashi+One.html>

<http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/IgnitionSuite/uploads/docs/Bokashi%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

### Worm Farms

[http://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/media/documents/services/waste-and-recycling/composting-and-worm-farming/Worm\\_farming\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](http://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/media/documents/services/waste-and-recycling/composting-and-worm-farming/Worm_farming_fact_sheet.pdf)

<http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/IgnitionSuite/uploads/docs/Worm%20Farming%20Information%20Sheet%202.pdf>

<https://www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/uploadedFiles/common/forms/refuse/Easy-worm-farming-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

[https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/Gardening\\_Compost\\_and\\_worm\\_farms\\_tagged.pdf](https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/Gardening_Compost_and_worm_farms_tagged.pdf)

### Composting

<https://www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/uploadedFiles/common/forms/refuse/Easy%20composting%20fact%20sheet.pdf>

[http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/IgnitionSuite/uploads/docs/Composting\\_Information\\_Sheet%20-%20Set%20Up.pdf](http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/IgnitionSuite/uploads/docs/Composting_Information_Sheet%20-%20Set%20Up.pdf)

How to build a compost pile <http://www.compostinstructions.com/how-to-build-a-compost-pile/>