How to Get Started with
Indoor Worm Composting

Red worms (*Eisenia fetida*) otherwise known as red wigglers, work well for worm bins because they do not need to burrow and can tolerate room temperatures. They can also consume up to their body’s weight per day in food. You can buy composting worms online or research local reputable vendors. Make sure you buy the correct worm species. A worm bin will produce finished compost, worm castings, in approximately three months.

**Worm Composting Bin**

**Supplies**
- 1 plastic opaque storage tote with lid (10 gallon)
- Drill to make vent holes
- Soil (1 cup)
- Newspaper (serves as bedding and food)
- Water
- Red worms (1 pound)

**Directions**
1. Drill about 30 ¼” sized holes on the lid of the tote for ventilation.
2. Fill the bin halfway with moist shredded newspaper that is the consistency of wrung-out sponge, one handful of soil (to add microorganisms) and 1-pound of red worms.
3. Bury food scraps in the newspaper. It may take a few days for the worms to get accustomed to their new home, so don’t be alarmed if they do not eat the scraps in the first week.

**Food and Care**
A handful of fresh food can be added about every three days. Bury the food scraps and monitor the bin to make sure food is getting eaten and pests such as fruit flies are not present.

- **Feed worms:** Worms can consume many fruit and vegetable peelings along with newspaper. Some examples are banana peels, apple cores, watermelon rinds, coffee grounds, and tea bags.
- **Do not feed worms:** Meat, oily food, bones, dairy, or acidic foods such as papaya, pineapple, or citrus.

Worms must stay moist to breathe. Keep the newspaper bedding as wet as a wrung-out sponge. Mist it with a spray bottle as needed. If it is too wet, add more shredded newspaper.

**Source**
web.extension.illinois.edu/worms

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