

Make Your Own Worm Farm

A Classroom Guide



Worm School



WE ♥
WORMS

KS1-2

Make Your Own Worm Farm

Teacher's Notes

INTRODUCTION

Small wormeries are the ideal classroom project for all primary ages and can be the source of multiple potential activities throughout the year. They can be adapted from a range of easily-found domestic containers. The Worm School activity kit includes instruction sheets for four different types of wormery - a two-bucket system, a swing bin, chest of drawers and a durable 'bag for life'.

Children can easily participate in various stages of setting up the bin, but it is important to note that each project requires some preparation by adults including cutting (with craft knife or scissors) and drilling.

QUICK GUIDE TO KEEPING WORMS

Once set up and containing worms, wormeries are easy to manage but they do require regular attention, which can all be managed by the class members with a little adult oversight. A worm care sheet is included with this pack.

1. Wormeries are perfect for keeping indoors, they should not smell if looked after, and the worms do not escape if they are well fed and happy.
2. Worms need regular feeding, and you will soon learn the extent of your worms appetites, but expect to feed them weekly at least.
3. Conditions need to be moist, with air circulation, but not too wet. Regular checks.
4. Leachate, often called 'worm wee', is the excess moisture that needs to be tapped off regularly to prevent smells and drowning the worms. Check weekly.
5. Worm poo - the black soil produced by the worms and properly called vermicompost or 'worm casts' will need to be harvested when the bin is full. Depending on the size of your bin this could be 1-4 times annually. Worm manure is the best natural fertiliser in the world and we have various activities in the pack to explore it.

MAKE YOUR OWN WORM FARM



You can watch short demo videos on how to make each of these types of worm farm at our website: theurbanworm.co.uk/diy-videos

You will need:

Containers. For the chest of drawers, plastic is best but if using wood, line with vinyl or correx to slow down the rot.

A drill, with a regular 5-7mm bit and a 1-inch hole saw bit; strong scissors or craft knife, marker pen, optional tap spigots (if you don't attach these you will need to manually pour off any leachate).

Some tough plastic sheeting - we use waste correx signboard, which is the material estate agents use, you can ask around for a couple of sheets.

Bedding for the worms - either coconut coir, well-rotted horse manure, shredded paper or compost.

Worms - buy online from Yorkshire Worms or use the activity pack to learn how to go on a worm hunt!

WHY YOU MUST HAVE HOLES IN YOUR WORM FARM

If your worms are happy they will not want to leave your worm farm. Sometimes people worry they might escape through the drill-holes. It is important to remember **they will suffocate without the air circulation** - and happy worms don't crawl out when you aren't looking!

Make Your Own Worm Farm

from two plastic containers

Make a worm farm for your classroom with two 10-litre buckets or larger containers of the same size.

INSTRUCTIONS

(1) Drill air holes around the top of one bucket with drainage holes in the bottom.

(2) Use a one-inch hole saw to add a large hole near the bottom of the second bucket for a drainage tap (this is optional).

(3) Put four small plant pots upside down in the bucket with the tap.

(4) Screw the drainage tap into the large hole.

(5) Place the other bucket inside this one, standing on the plant pots

(6) Now add bedding for the worms, for this you can use:

- shredded paper
- compost
- coconut coir
- well-rotted horse manure

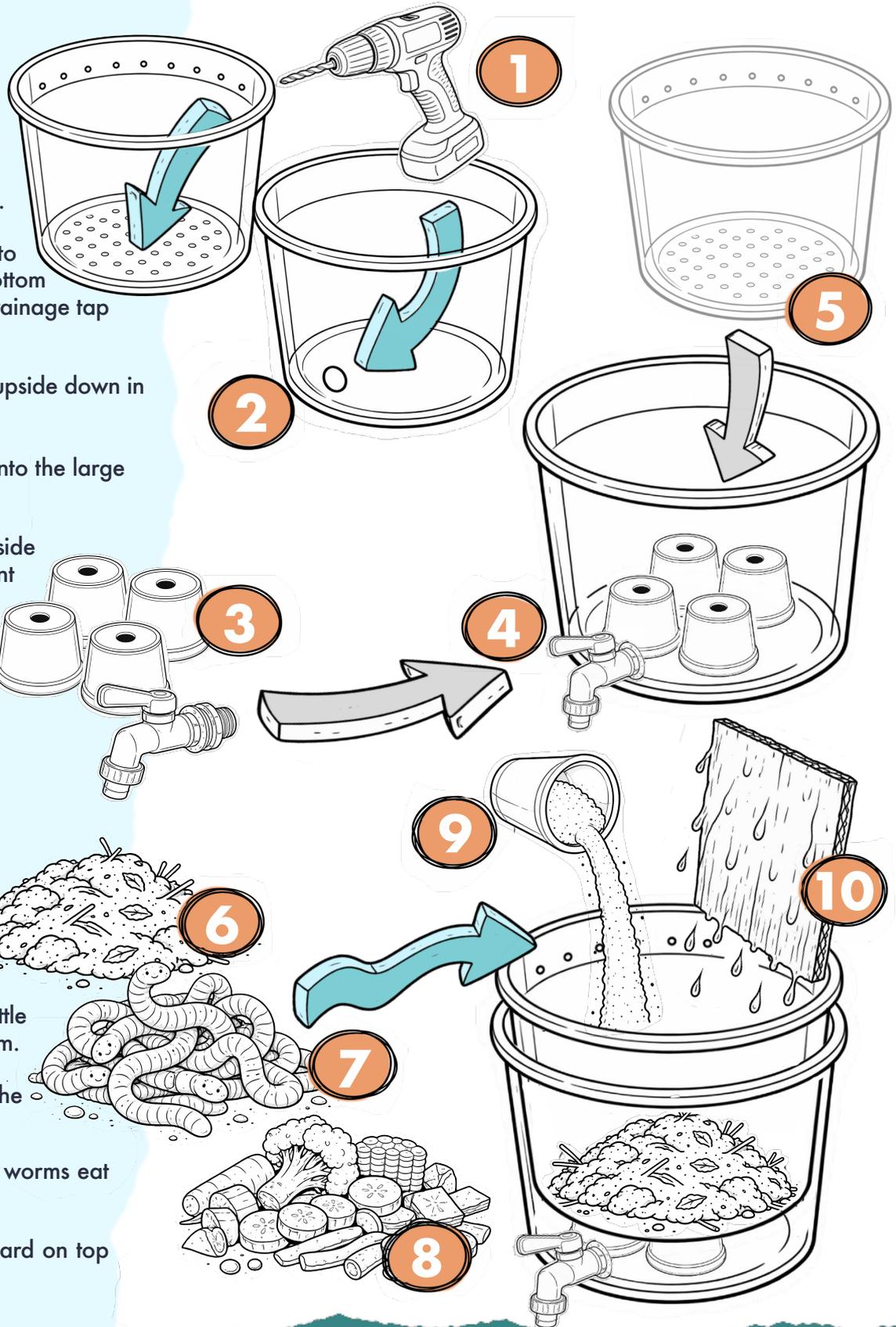
Make sure the bedding contains moisture, it should feel like a damp sponge.

(7) Add your worms! Put a little of the bedding on top of them.

(8) Add some food – check the worm menu for details.

(9) Add a little sand to help worms eat their food.

(10) Put some damp cardboard on top and cover with the lid.



Make Your Own Worm Farm

from a set of drawers

Make a worm farm for your classroom with a chest of drawers.

INSTRUCTIONS

(1) Drill drainage holes in the base of all but the bottom drawer (used to collect liquids).

(2) Start your worm farm in the next-to-bottom drawer.

(3) Add bedding for the worms, for this you can use:

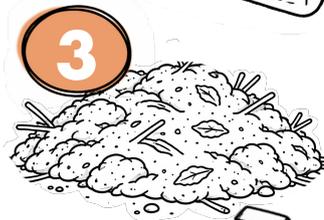
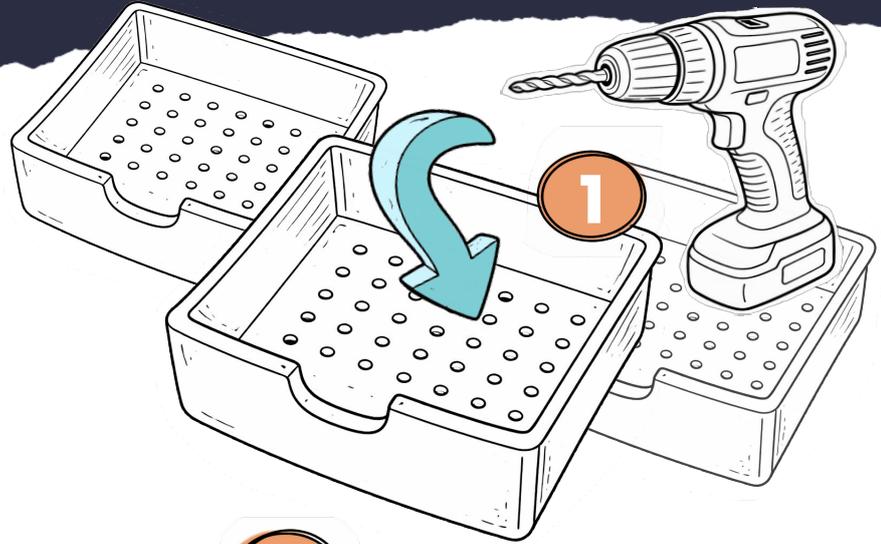
- shredded paper
- compost
- coconut coir
- well-rotted horse manure

(4) Add your worms! Put a little of the bedding on top of them.

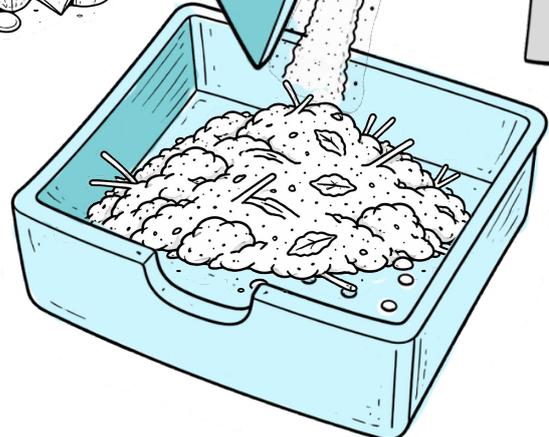
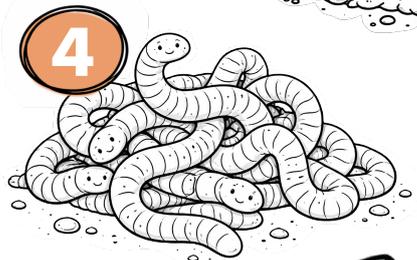
(5) Add some food – check the worm menu for details.

(6) Add a little sand for digestion.

(7) Put some damp cardboard on top and place back in the unit.



make sure the bedding contains moisture, it should feel like a damp sponge.



Make Your Own Worm Farm

using a bag for life

Make a worm farm for your classroom with a bag for life.

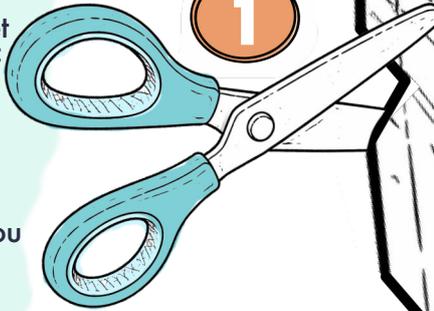
INSTRUCTIONS

(1) Cut drainage holes in the base of the bag.

(2) Cut a plastic sheet to sit in the bottom of the bag and drill drainage holes in it.

(3) Add bedding for the worms, for this you can use:

- shredded paper
- compost
- coconut coir
- well-rotted horse manure



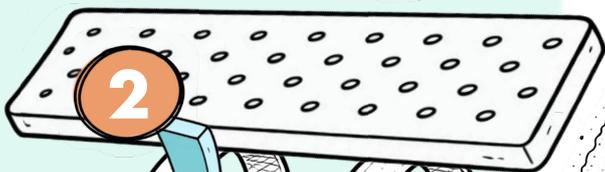
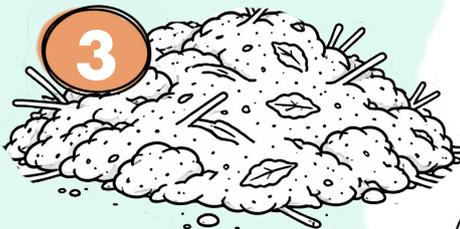
Make sure your bedding has enough moisture for the worms - it should feel like a damp sponge.

(4) Add your worms! Put a little of the bedding on top of them.

(5) Add some food - check the worm menu for details.

(6) Add a little sand for digestion.

(7) Put some damp cardboard on top and place your worm farm somewhere that it can drain away moisture from the holes in the base.



Make Your Own Worm Farm

from a swing bin

Make a worm farm for your classroom with a large kitchen swing bin.

INSTRUCTIONS

(1) Drill air holes around the top of the bin and drainage holes in a plastic base cut to measure for the bottom of the bin.

(2) Use a one-inch hole saw to add a large hole near the bottom of the bin for a drainage tap (this is optional).

(3) Put four small plant pots upside down in the bin.

(4) Screw the drainage tap into the large hole.

(5) Place the drainage tray in the bin on top of the flower pots.

(6) Now add bedding for the worms, for this you can use:

- shredded paper
- compost
- coconut coir
- well-rotted horse manure

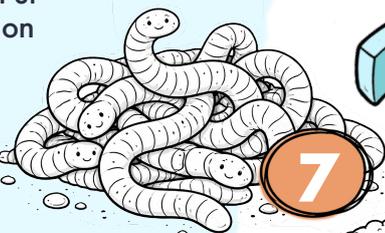
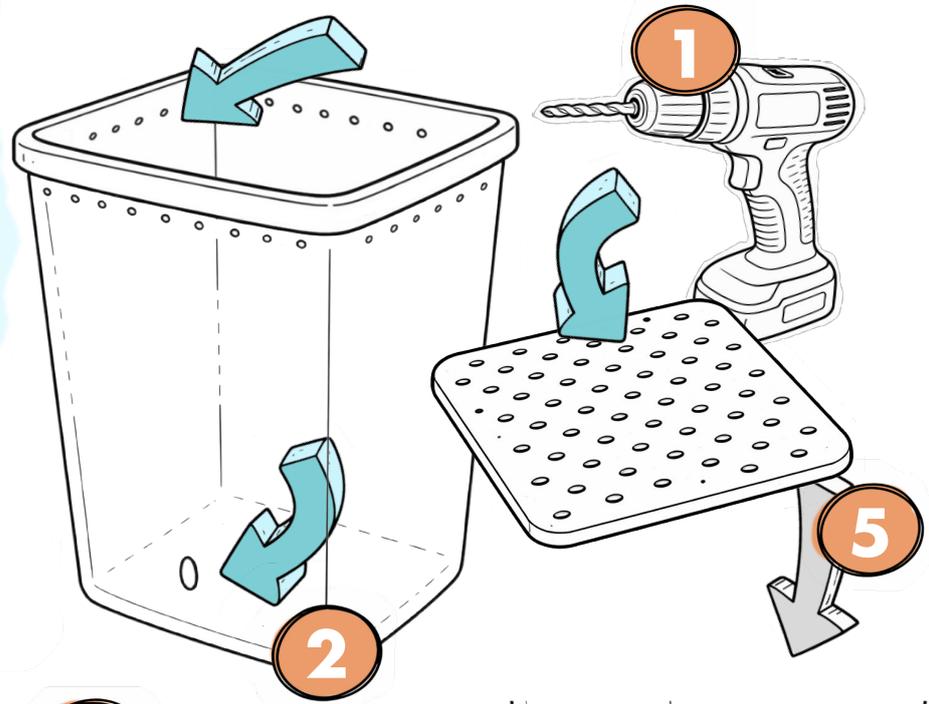
Make sure the bedding contains moisture, it should feel like a damp sponge.

(7) Add your worms! Put a little of the bedding on top of them.

(8) Add some food – check the worm menu for details.

(9) Add a little sand to help worms eat their food.

(10) Put some damp cardboard on top and cover with the swing lid.



Looking After The Worm Farm

Class Guide

Be a good worm farmer

Worms are easy to look after but just remember a few things to check up on each week, to keep them happy.

Weekly Checklist

- Say hello
but remember they are very shy and they don't like the light
- Feed the worms
check the worm menu chop the food up into small pieces
- Empty the worm wee
mix it with water for the plants
- Check the farm is moist
like a damp sponge too dry - add some wet cardboard too wet - add some shredded paper
- Add a little carbon
Egg box, loo roll, damp cardboard
- Every two weeks - a pinch of sand
This helps them grind up the food - they have tiny mouths and no teeth!

Where to put your worm farm

Your worms like it best when the temperature is between 10-30°C - about the same as us - so it would be best if they could be indoors, or in a shed. Not near a washing machine - they don't like the vibration!

Outside, keep in a shady place away from hot sun, put a little carpet or fabric on top so that the rain doesn't disturb them with pitter-patter, and wrap the worm farm up for the winter - cardboard, bubble-wrap, even old blankets.

Don't forget to feed them even in winter - they won't want as much, but they still need a little.



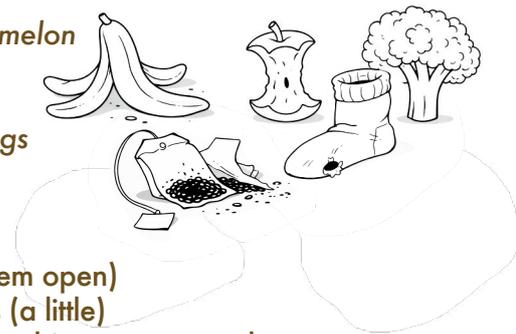
Worm menu

Worms will love to eat most of your kitchen scraps, but it's best to keep a few things out.

How much food? 200g of worms will eat 50-100g of food a day. But sometimes they eat less, so if it's not going down, wait a week and try again.

Good food guide

- Most fruit
Their favourite is melon
- Vegetables
Especially potato and carrot peelings
- Pasta
- Cereal
- Bread
- Teabags (rip them open)
- Coffee grounds (a little)
- Eggshells, halves, bits, even ground up
- They love horse manure if you have a horse!



No thank you

- Onion and garlic
- Citrus fruits
- Dairy - milk, cheese, yoghurt
- Meat
- Oil and oily foods will suffocate worms



With a good diet and some excellent worm farming by the class, you will soon have plenty of worm poo to harvest. And what will you do with that?



Make Your Own Worm Farm

End Notes

BOOK US FOR TALKS, VISITS & INSTALLS



- Engaging talks and activities for the classroom led by the experts from The Urban Worm
- Staff CPD, parent & community engagement projects
- Setting up worm farms, whether small classroom versions or large-scale kitchen waste composting
- CPD visits to Worm HQ in Nottinghamshire



The Urban Worm CIC is based in Nottinghamshire, and was founded in 2013 by Anna de la Vega, the UK's leading expert on vermicomposting. Since incorporation we have been on a mission to promote the benefits of worm farming as far and wide as possible. Anna is a widely-recognised speaker on the international vermiculture circuit, with a passion for the worm that enthuses and engages. Anna and her team have been delivering face-to-face classroom and community projects for over a decade across the UK and beyond.



The organisation can advise, design, install or even maintain large-scale composting worm farms, including managing whole-school kitchen waste, and has worked with major corporations on designing sustainable waste management systems with worms.

Curious to see how we manage a large worm composting system at our base in Nottinghamshire, where we produce the exceptionally high quality compost known as **Magic Manure**? We are able to offer staff CPD visits to the farm to demonstrate how professional composting works.

If you are interested in extending your worm farming activities and would like our input, email us at the address below for more details, or check our website.

info@theurbanworm.co.uk
theurbanworm.co.uk

EDUCATIONAL DISCOUNT CODE

We are pleased to offer an educational discount in conjunction with the Worm School Activity Pack - for 10% discount on all worm farming products in our shop, excluding Magic Manure. Purchases must be delivered to education institutions or other established service providers. Contact us for more details, or use the following code when checking out at our shop:

KS1-2app



© The Urban Worm CIC, 2026

The Worm School Activity Pack is provided as a free resource to schools, colleges, informal settings & home education groups, and we welcome further distribution. However the copyright remains with The Urban Worm CIC, and must not be passed off as original material by others. Our distinguishing logomarks must not be removed from the documents.