How to build a wooden compost box

You will need

- 4 pressure treated timber posts (minimum 5cm by 5cm) all cut to 1m, or your required height
- Pressure treated timber planks (cut to 1m lengths if 1m square bin)
- 16m of roof tiling timber batten
- Nails or screws (galvanised for longer life)
- Hammer (if using nails) or drill with screwdriver attachment (if using screws)
- 4m timber batten (2.5cm by 2.5cm) for lid
- 1m by 1m weld mesh
Instructions

1. Cut the roof tiling timber batten into 1m lengths and fix to the pressure treated posts (Fig.1) using nails or screws.

2. Position the batten so that the two lengths run parallel to each other with a gap in between large enough to slide in the cut lengths of timber planks (Fig.2).

3. Slide in the pre cut treated timber planks (Fig.3) and secure the bottom plank with a screw or nail through the batten and plank. This will stop it falling apart when you move it.
4. Repeat this process for the other three posts to build a four-sided square box (Fig.4). You may wish to secure the top planks on three sides of your compost box to add to stability. Leave the fourth side unsecured, so you can gain easy access and turn the compost.

5. Place the weld mesh flat on the ground. Put the compost box on top of it. Attach to sides with fencing tacks for added security (Fig.5).

6. To build the lid, measure the inside of the compost box and construct a square frame from the 2.5cm by 2.5cm batten and the timber planks. The lid should fit snugly inside the compost box (Fig.6).

7. Start to fill with waste, remove front approximately every month and turn the material.
Suppliers of reclaimed wood
If you would prefer to build your compost box from recycled wood, the following organisations can supply all the necessary reclaimed timber. They can also make wooden compost bins to your required size on request.

**Brighton & Hove Wood Recycling Project**
Municipal Market, Circus Street, Brighton BN2 9QF
Tel 01273 570500

**Hastings & Bexhill Wood Recycling Project**
Britannia Enterprise Centre, Waterworks Road, Hastings TN34 1RT
Tel 01424 715566

**Mid Sussex Wood Recycling Project**
The Dairy Barn, Rocky Lane, Haywards Heath RH16 4RR
Tel 01273 565243

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Tel 01273 482144
eastsussex.gov.uk/composting
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January 2011
How to build a wormery using stacking boxes

You will need

- Three stacking boxes (the type you can store kids toys in). You will need to buy one with a lid or make your own from a piece of hardboard or plywood (big enough to stop any rain from getting in)
- 2m of weld mesh (smallest gauge is best)
- A pair of wire cutters
- Thin wire or garden ties
- Drill with small drill bit or bevel
- Hacksaw or sharp knife (such as a Stanley knife)
- Plastic tap (from water butt or brewing barrel)
- Small bag of stone chippings
- A newspaper
Instructions

1. Remove the base of two of the boxes, but leave a 5cm edge all the way round the base so that the weld mesh can be attached to it. Draw on guidelines with marker pen before cutting with a sharp knife (such as a Stanley knife) or drill large holes in each marked corner and cut with a hacksaw (Fig.1).

2. Cut the weld mesh to fit inside the box. Make small holes in the box edge (with the drill or bevel) to thread through wire or garden ties to secure weld mesh to box. Use around 8 attachments equally spaced around box edge, twist the wire or garden tie to make sure the weld mesh does not come off (Fig.2).

3. Make a hole to accommodate the tap in the uncut box about 5cm from the bottom. Secure the tap with a washer and plastic nut on the inside (Fig.3).
4. Add a layer of stone chippings (approximately 10cm deep) into the box with tap, this will allow the wormery to drain but will prevent any escaped worms from drowning.

5. To build the wormery, place the box with the tap the bottom (place on some bricks or a wooden box to allow access to the tap), then add one of the boxes with the weld mesh. In this box add a layer of newspaper (to prevent the worms falling through) and then put in a 5cm layer of compost. Add worms (tiger or brandling) into the compost. Place the box with lid attached on top of the middle box and leave to acclimatise for 2/3 days.

6. Start adding your kitchen waste into the top tier. This will attract the worms up from the layer below.

7. Harvest the compost from the lower box when the top box becomes full up. Remove the upper box, empty the compost out of the bottom one and a place this one on the top of the stack. Then simply start adding your waste to the empty box in the top tier.

8. Make sure you drain the lower box on a regular basis. This will prevent the wormery from becoming waterlogged. If the waste looks like it is becoming sludgy, add some shredded paper to absorb excess moisture.
Worms for wormeries

‘Tiger’ or ‘Brandling’ worms (Eisenia fetida) are the best types to use in a wormery. There are also other types you can use such as Eisenia hortensis (formerly Dendrobaena). Earthworms from your garden are not suitable because they require different living conditions. You will need around 100 to 500 worms to start with depending on the amount of waste you intend to add.

Where can I get hold of the worms:

- Fishing shops usually stock the Eisenia hortensis worm for fishing bait which can be used in wormeries. Sold by the pot or by weight.

- Mail order companies supply worms for wormeries:
  Wiggly Wigglers Tel 01981 500391 wigglywigglers.co.uk
  Original Organics Tel 01884 841515 originalorganics.co.uk
  The Bin Company Tel 0845 602 3630 thebincompany.com

Tel 01273 482144
eastsussex.gov.uk/composting
We cannot recommend or endorse any company listed
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How to build a wormery using tyres

You will need

- Three old tyres of the same size
- A piece of plywood or hardwood (big enough to build a lid)
- 3m of weld mesh (smallest gauge is best)
- A pair of wire cutters
- Thin wire or garden ties
- Drill with small drill bit or bevel
- Sack of shredded paper
- Old newspapers or cardboard
Instructions

1. The wormery will need to be positioned on a hard standing area. Create a base from old bricks or paving slabs (must be flat and with as few cracks as possible). Place a heavy/thick layer of newspaper on top of the bricks.

2. Cut the weld mesh in a rough circle, so that it fits into the tyre rim. Make small holes in the tyre rim (with the drill or bevel). Thread through wire or garden ties to secure the weld mesh to the tyre. Use around 8 attachments equally spaced on the rim edge, twist the wire or garden tie to make sure the weld mesh does not come off. Fix the weld mesh to the other two tyres as above (Fig.1).

3. Stuff the three old tyre rims with shredded paper. Pile the tyres on top of each other, with the first tyre on the layer of heavy/thick newspaper (Fig.2).
4. Add some shredded paper or torn up cardboard in the bottom to soak up any excess liquid.

5. Add about a 5cm layer of compost into the bottom tyre of the wormery.

6. Add worms (tiger or brandling) and leave to acclimatise for 2/3 days.

7. Start adding your kitchen waste into the top tier. This will attract the worms up from the layer below.

8. Use a piece of board, weighed down with some bricks, as a lid. The lid must be big enough to stop rain getting in (Fig.4).

9. Harvest the bottom tyres worth of fertilizer when the top tyre is full up, remove the upper tiers of tyres, empty the compost out of the bottom one and a place this one on the top of the stack. Then simply start adding your waste to the tyre in the top tier. You may need to replace the paper layer at the bottom at this stage.
Worms for wormeries

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