



The Treading Lightly Inc. Composting Comparison Guide

	BOKASHI	WORM FARM	TUMBLER	CLOSED BIN	CONE	PILE/HEAP	PIT/TRENCH	3-BIN	IN-GROUND	
	A closed container suitable for kitchen counter top. Organic matter is mashed down to remove air pockets.	Specific worms eat organic waste and turn it into waste via their castings (poo).	A closed container mounted on a support above the ground, with an external handle attached for turning while the door is closed.	A lidded, bottomless barrel which sits directly on soil or grass (contained heap). Organic matter is added through the lid.	A tall cone-shaped container that circulates air to food scraps and allows existing bacteria and worms in the soil to break down..	A large pile of moist decaying organic matter.	Organic matter is added to a pit or trench and covering up again.	A system of storing and rotating fresh, partly and fully decomposed organic material.	A lidded cone-shaped bottomless vessel that allows existing bacteria and worms in the ground to pet poo.	
	TYPE	Anaerobic Fermentation	Decomposition	Decomposition	Decomposition	Decomposition	Decomposition	Decomposition	Decomposition	
	HOT/COLD	Cold	Cold	Hot	Cold	Cold	Hot/Cold	Cold	Hot/Cold	
SPACE REQUIRED	INDOOR	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	OUTDOOR SMALL SPACE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	
	OUTDOOR LARGE SPACE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
WHAT YOU CAN COMPOST	FOOD SCRAPS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	
	MEAT, DAIRY	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	
	CITRUS, ONIONS, CHILLI, OIL	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	
	GREEN WASTE	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	
	PET WASTE	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	
HOW YOU CAN COMPOST	MATERIALS REQUIRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bin with drain Inoculated bran Outdoor area for burying bokashi scraps to cure. Shovel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-ventilated wooden or plastic box Green: Brown = 6:4 Minimum 1000 worms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drum with turning mechanism/ compost tumbler Shovel-full of rich soil Green: Brown = 6:4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drum/bin/bucket, with lid and open bottom Green: Brown = 6:4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cone Food scraps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yard space Shovel Green: Brown = 6:4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-bin compost system (wood, wire, mesh, plastic) Shovel/pitchfork Green: Brown = 6:4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shovel Pet poo Enzyme grains. 	
	PROCESS	Set up bokashi bin. Add 'greens. Sprinkle a thin layer of bran over food scraps. Repeat layering until bin is full. Remove to 2ndry location (cool, out of direct sunlight). After 10 days, bury pickled food waste.	Buy/build well-ventilated worm box. Purchase/source 1,000 worms. Lay browns as base layer Add greens to brown layer. Add browns & greens regularly. Ensure worms' home is sufficiently moist and aerated.	Install tumbler outdoors with good ventilation. Add greens to tumbler. Add browns to tumbler.	Place bin on grass. Lay browns as base layer Add greens to brown layer. Add browns & greens regularly.	Install cone on a flat, open-soil surface with good drainage. Add food scraps to the removable basket daily/as required. Requires additives.	Select area in garden (min. 0.6m x 0.6m). Lay browns as base layer Add greens to brown layer. Add browns & greens regularly.	Select area in garden (min 0.6m x 0.6m). Add greens to hole. Cover the greens with soil and pack down with shovel. Optional (to protect soil layer): add brown over greens prior to covering the hole with soil.	Install a three bin/box system in your yard. Lay browns as base layer Add greens to brown layer. Add browns & greens regularly.	Select area in garden (min 0.3m x 0.3m). Dig hole to install unit. Add dog/cat poo to hole. Sprinkle with enzyme grains. Replace lid.
	OUTPUT/HARVEST	Concentrated liquid fertiliser or 'bokashi tea'	Concentrated liquid fertiliser or 'worm juice' and worm castings	Dark, rich earthy soil-like mix.	Dark, rich earthy soil-like mix.	No compost to harvest.	Dark, rich earthy soil-like mix.	Not harvestable.	Dark, rich earthy soil-like mix.	No compost to harvest.
	VOLUME	Limited to unit size.	Limited to unit size.	Limited to unit size.	Limited to unit size.	Limited to unit size.	Unlimited	Limited by hole depth.	Limited by bin sizes.	Limited by hole depth.
	EXPOSED TO/ATTRACTS PESTS	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
BENEFITS/LIMITATIONS	PROS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No turning. Small-space friendly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster than composting. Great in a garage, laundry or home with no backyard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to turn (unless full). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drains excess moisture easily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No turning. Small-space friendly. Emptying required only every 5 years or so (no maintenance). Does not require browns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inexpensive. No prep required. Easy to harvest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invisible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to access. Easy harvesting. Easy/efficient to maintain once installed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only the lid is visible.
	CONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires additional curing period underground. Requires regular additives. Must dig up cured compost to harvest (optional). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces beautiful juice but this needs collecting or worms can drown. Worms die from: overheating/cold if conditions not perfect. Worms will die if not fed as they cannot move around a garden to find food. If you go away on holidays you need to get someone to feed them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hot composting not easy due to turning regularity. Can be difficult to empty (harvest). No contact with the earth, only soil that is added. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be difficult to turn. Contents may rot under wet conditions. Might generate odours. Can be difficult to access harvest unless includes low door. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not portable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires regular manual turning. Unattractive/unappealing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires digging a hole/trench (labour intensive). Not portable. Need to store food waste until buried. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires regular manual turning. Contents may rot under wet conditions. Not portable. Requires large space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial digging of small hole.
TIME REQUIRED	MAINTENANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every day or every second day, drain off liquid from spigot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires regular moisture. Drain 'worm tea' as needed. Drainage & some maintenance/care required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn handle 1-3 times a week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure heap remains moist (like damp sponge). Mix once a week, or when internal temperature reaches 65-70° celcius. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the scraps are not overflowing from the cone installation site at any point. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure heap remains moist (like a damp sponge). Mix once a week, or when internal temperature reaches 65-70° celcius. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure heap remains moist (like a damp sponge). When internal temperature reaches 65-70° celcius, move compost contents into the 2nd bin. Repeat until bin contents have 'cooked' through and you are left with a third bin full of completed compost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sprinkle with enzyme grains weekly. 	
	WAITING TO HARVEST	4 weeks approximately (2 weeks in the bin, 2 weeks in the ground)	3 - 4 months	3 - 6 months	6 - 12 months	5 years (ongoing)	3 - 18 months	6 - 12 months	3 - 12 months	NA
COST	\$50 - \$100	\$85 - \$300	\$90 - \$250	\$45- \$80	approx. \$250	Free	Free	\$500 - \$100 to build	\$60	