



6 NOT COMPOSTING

We all know fruit and vegetable scraps are great for the compost bin, but there are other household items adding bulk to our kitchen bins – and therefore landfill – that can be put to good use.

Wood-fire ash, coffee grounds, tea leaves, tissues and even vacuum dust can all be added to the mix and your garden will thank you. Even apartment dwellers with a balcony can get in on the act as worm farms take up little space.

Unbelievable as it sounds, one kilogram of earth worms can eat their own weight in scraps in just a day, leaving behind fertilised soil known as castings that are pretty much the caviar of the compost heap. Hardware stores have a great selection of compost bins that are as simple as a (preferably recycled) plastic container to top-of-the-line numbers that spin, making aeration a breeze. For those interested in DIY, the Bunnings website has a downloadable PDF file that explains how to build a worm farm and what to feed them. Visit www.bunnings.com.au and type 'Worm Farms' in the search box: select the file 'How to Build a Worm Farm.aspx.'

7 USING CHEMICAL CLEANING PRODUCTS

There's no need to be pouring chemicals such as sulphates, phosphates and petroleum by-products down our sinks. These are common ingredients in many cleaning items, but unnecessary now there are so many plant-based products that do the dirty work beautifully. Yes, they cost a bit more, but prices are coming down as demand grows. At the very least, switch to phosphate-free dishwasher and washing-machine powders – our waterways will be eternally grateful.

Chemical-free drycleaning is tougher to find, but there are alternatives to using perc (as perchloroethylene is commonly known), the solvent that's the current norm, so ask around. Take a look at Daisy (www.daisy.net.au), a Melbourne-based chemical-free drycleaning business. ■

THERE ARE EASY WAYS FOR KIDS TO GO GREEN, TOO. SEE THE FUN AND COLOURFUL LUNCHBOXES AT WWW.TRASHBAGS.COM.AU, MADE FROM DISCARDED JUICE PACKS THAT USUALLY END UP IN LANDFILL.

