



## Worm Condo startup guide

Install the spigot and add the first tray to the base, save the others for later.

### Bedding preparation



In a large bowl, soak the coco brick with lukewarm water, wait a bit and detach big chunks and add water as needed until all is broken in small parts. When all fluffy, add the cardboard/newsprint. When available, add 1 cup of outside soil or ripe homemade compost (no bagged soil). This provides more microorganisms necessary for the good start of the vermicomposter. If you receive worms with the Condo, this step is not needed as worms come already in a living soil.

Add water as needed, until the mixture is moist, but not soggy. Squeeze part of the mixture in your hand, it should run 1-2 drops, no more. If the mixture is too wet, add a little dry cardboard to obtain the desired humidity.

### First tray

Place 2 sheets of newspaper at the bottom of the tray, the ink color is not toxic, only avoid glossy papers. Spread your previously prepared mixture evenly on the newspaper and add the worms on top. Leave a light on so the worms integrate into their new home. Once the worms are gone, place 2 more wet newspaper sheets on top and then, put the lid on. Wait until the next day before feeding them. It is possible that some will venture on the walls or even under the lid, it is normal, they are exploring!

### Add additional trays

When your first tray is full, at 1 inch from the edge, add a 2nd tray (Alternate A and B) and start feeding it. Since it is best to cover the food so that it is not out in the open, take some bedding from the first tray to make sure the new food is never uncovered.

### Check moisture, specially at startup

If you have a plant hygrometer, check that the humidity is around 8-9 on the 0-10 scale. The mixture must always remain well moist, without being soggy. Decomposing fruits / vegetables will also create moisture, so it is most likely that you will not have to add any water, if the humidity drops too much, use a small spray bottle with warm water.

### Feeding

The worms need to have a balanced ratio between the materials rich in carbon also called "brown" (packing box, pizza box, egg carton, roll of toilet paper, newspapers...) and those rich in nitrogen, called "green" (mainly fruits / vegetables but also in small quantities bread, pizza crust, baked pasta). This ratio should be 1:1. This parameter is essential for the balance of your vermicomposter. Cut out your waste so that it is not too big (pieces of about 1/2in). The more finely chopped they are, the more quickly they will be degraded by the worms.

### Exceptions

Your new friends dislike certain foods such as: onion, garlic, leek and all citrus fruits (also very acidic). A few pieces here and there will eventually disappear without a problem, but avoid the large amounts of orange peel from the morning juice! Other foods such as dairy products, meat and fish, sauces and prepared foods should not go to the vermicomposter.

### Collect the compost

When your bins are all full, often after 3 months, remove the bottom tray, it should contain a nice, rich compost and hardly any worms since they have all migrated upwards to the fresh food. Rinse the tray if necessary and put it back on top, it becomes your new feeder tray. Repeat with each full tray for a constant supply of rich compost.

CAUTION: This compost is alive! It should never be long in an airtight container or a bag without ventilation, it must breathe in order to stay "alive". It can be stored for several months for future use.