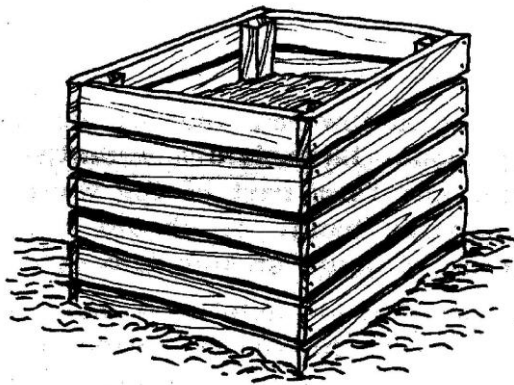


# Garbage Muncher



A garbage muncher is a 'do-it-yourself' waste disposal unit which is noiseless, saves electricity, is guaranteed not to break down, is user and environmentally friendly and leaves you with rich compost and castings to use in the garden instead of wasting organic material down the drain. Although the measurements are not critical, a GM is a bottomless wood slatted box 125 cm x 4 sides and 125 cm high, and is sufficient for kitchen waste from a large family.

Loosen and remove 10 cm of soil where the box will live and set the box 10 cm into the ground to stop rats and mice gaining access. Add about 15 cm of chopped straw or hay mixed with some rough soil.

Collect your kitchen waste for a few days in a rubbish tin including only small amounts of citrus waste and onion skins, which can be hard on the worms' digestive system. When you have a decent amount, at least a third of the tin, spread the garbage can contents in the bottom of the box and cover with the 10 cm of soil you removed.

1. Empty around 4000 worms of mixed sizes on top of the soil and watch them burrow down. Ideally the area needs around 10,000 but 4,000 will soon breed up.
2. Keep the contents damp but not sodden. Cover with a square of old carpet underfelt to keep in moisture and keep down smells.
3. Add the garbage daily or weekly with an occasional sprinkling of lime. Dampness, soil bacteria, micro-organisms and worms will convert the garbage into black gold.
4. Once the box is full of compost and castings, feed the worms in one corner only, making it easier to fork them out to the next GM location. Lift the box vertically into the new spot.

Mix the compost and castings with sand and/or peat moss to make a rich potting mix. Fork it straight into beds, pot plants, seedling boxes, or as a mulch around precious garden plants.

## For more information contact

**Waste Education Services** – Phone: (03) 545 9176 or email: [sarahlangi@nec.org.nz](mailto:sarahlangi@nec.org.nz)