



Worm Condos AKA Worm Towers

Every year I make a point to learn a little more in the realm of gardening. Composting and vermiculture have been some what life changing for me when it comes to gardening and once again I have found perhaps a less labor intensive way to implement vermiculture to my raised beds.

For my raised beds I have constructed what is called worm towers. Worm towers implement the same ideas of how to raise worms in bins but instead of doing the hard work of harvesting the worm castings to spread throughout your garden the worms do that hard work for us.

It is really quite simple, Here is what you need:

- 4 inch PVC Pipe cut into 2 1/2 foot sections
- screening or shade cloth
- large old pot
- power drill

Most PVC pipe is sold in the length of 10 feet. So you will need to cut the PVC pipe into 2 1/2 foot sections. This produces 4 worm towers.

Once you have the PVC pipe cut to the right size you are going to drill holes all over the bottom 18 inches

18 inches of the PVC pipe. What this creates is an environment for the worms to move freely in and out of the tube. Kitchen scraps will be placed in the PVC pipe and the worms will come in and feed on the scraps. They will exit the pipe and deposit those valuable worm castings throughout the garden bed. The great thing about all this is you get a good deep fertilizing directly to the roots of all your plants.

Next dig a hole that is 2 feet deep. Place the PVC pipe in the whole. Make sure the part of the PVC pipe with all the drill holes goes into the earth. Next simply fill the hole with remaining dirt making sure to leave about 6 inches of the worm tower exposed.

Cut the screening into a 6 inch square and place the screen over the opening of the worm tower. The screen prevents flies going in and laying eggs and what not in there. Then take your large pot and place it over the screen.

Preparing the Perfect Worm Environment

Straw, or shredded paper, leaves

Kitchen scraps

Handful of [red wigglers](#)

You are going to fill the worm tower about half way with kitchen scraps and straw (or shredded paper, leaves) this is food for the worms. Then grab a handful of red wigglers to the worm tower.

Now let the magic begin, simple continue to add kitchen scraps to the worm tower. The worms will eat everything you didn't want to and will turn your garbage into very valuable nutrients to your raised beds.

Next, read the instructions on the bag of cement and mix per instructions. Again, the adult may have to get it started, but let the little ones mix it 'till it's smooth.

Next step, have the kiddos hold the PVC pipe in the center of the pot and the adult can pour the cement around the pipe 'till it's about 3 inches deep. Allow the cement to set for about 12 hours.

After the cement sets, drill two holes in the sides of the pot, just an inch above the cement. This allows the water drain out of the pot ***important because we just filled the drain wholes with cement.

Next, insert the wooden rod into the PVC that is set in the cement.

Pour soil into the pot, leaving about 2 inches at the rim of the pot.

Screw 4 eye screws into the top of the rod - evenly spaced.

Cut 4 lengths of twine and tie one end to each eye screw and the other end to a landscape staple.

Insert the landscape staples into the soil and then add more soil to fill the pot. Finally, plant one morning glory at the base of each twine.

Then, with a little water and a lot of love, little seeds or little plants will soar to amazing heights with the most amazing colors all summer long.

What I love most about this gift is that kids get a little taste of working with tools, cement, and hardware and they get a glimpse into gardening. Kids can learn many skills from the art of hand made gift giving and they, just like adults, take great pride in their efforts. It is so much fun to watch them create and perfect their towers and, best of all, watch them present their gifts to their mothers.

Now how sweet is that! Happy Mother's Day!