

WILD YOUR SPACE

Wild your school
Rewild your children

Wormeries

Wormeries come in all shapes and sizes, and we've added a couple of options; Option 1 (quick and easy), or Option 2 (which is a bit more involved).

Your time and resources will determine how you go about it, but either way your children will enjoy learning about ecosystems, the importance of soil health and how to become scientific observers.



Option 1

Quick, easy, temporary, likely to be free.

What you'll need

2 litre clear, plastic bottle, safety scissors, compost, soil or a mixture of both, sharp sand, a few worms per bottle, water to dampen layers, worm food – grated carrot, vegetable peelings, dead leaves or shredded newspaper, black cardboard.

Step by step

- Fill the bottle with alternating layers of sand, soil and compost. Spray each layer with water so that it is damp. Cut the top quarter off your plastic bottle to make a lid. Make a slit in the side of the lid so that the top can close over the bottom part. Collect some worms from outdoors – encourage children to look in a compost heap, under stones in damp places, or dig a hole to find them.
- Add a few worms to the top of the bottle and watch them burrow down. Then add the 'food' (vegetable peelings, dead leaves or shredded newspaper) to the top. Wrap the black cardboard around the bottle to make it dark. Worms do not like light and it will encourage them to burrow around the outside of the bottle so they can be observed. Place the wormery in a warm place.

- Remove the cardboard for observation periods and record findings. The layers will disappear as the sand and soil mix together and channels appear where the worms have burrowed. Check that the contents are damp and that there is food available for the worms – do not feed the worms citrus fruits or onions. After one week, release the worms back outdoors in a suitable spot, to enable them to continue breaking down natural materials and improving your soil.



Option 2

Takes longer, may be some expense, longer lasting.

To create something more significant and longer lasting, then this **Keep Scotland Beautiful page** (with full instructions) AND a useful video will explain all...

keepsotlandbeautiful.org/live-lessons/litter-waste/build-a-wormery

Worm facts

- There are 26 different species of worms in the UK.
- Earthworms breathe through their skin, so they have to come to the surface when it rains or risk drowning.
- Worms can move an amazing amount of soil for their small size – a worm can eat its own weight in soil in one day.
- Earthworms burrow through the soil creating channels that add oxygen to the soil and allow carbon dioxide to escape. The channels also allow rain to drain away compost which can be added to potting mixes.
- Worm casts which are seen on the surface of lawns are made by 5 types of worms, called casting worms. Mostly found from autumn to spring, these casts are by-products of eating (i.e. worm poo!).
- Earthworms range in length from a tiny one millimetre to a massive three metres.
- Worms do not have eyes and prefer the dark. They can sense light and dark and prefer dark conditions because they are easily damaged by UV rays and will dry out quickly.



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www.brightgreennature.org/wildyourspace