

# Join the Compost Revolution



## Bokashi

Bokashi uses enzymes, micro-organisms and anaerobic bacteria to ferment organic materials inside the bin. Fermentation metabolises the carbohydrates in scraps into lactic acid and breaks down cell walls for faster decomposition. After about 3 weeks, you have rich liquid fertiliser (bokashi juice!) and readily decomposable fermented semi-solids.

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## 1 The basics

## 1 The basics

Bokashi is anaerobic composting that you can do both indoors and outdoors.

It's a great way to turn your kitchen scraps into rich liquid and semi-solid fertiliser.

Your garden and pot plants will love you for it.



## 1 The basics



### Did you know?

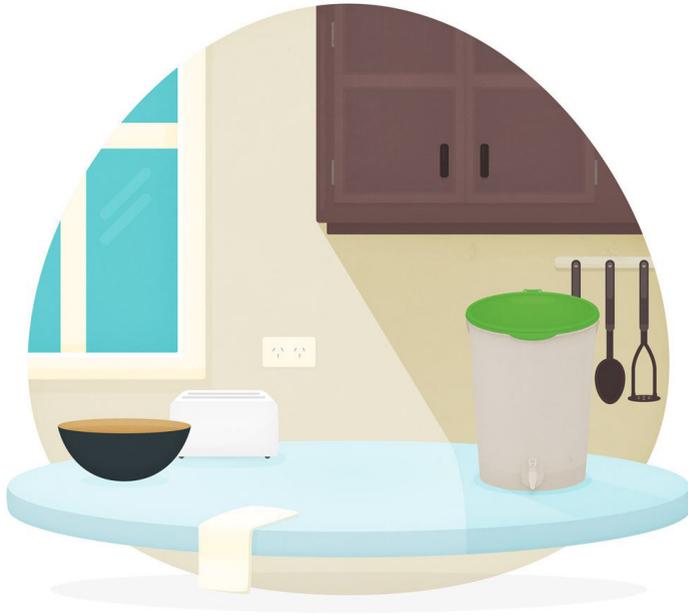
- ✓ Bokashi (ぼかし) is Japanese for “morphed from its original state.”
- ✓ It is derived from a Japanese farming practice where farmers buried food waste under soil rich in micro-organisms so that it broke down much faster than usual (between 1-3 weeks).
- ✓ It took until the 1980s before people brought the practice inside with bokashi bins.

## 2 The perfect home

When done correctly, bokashi bins are insect-free with a mild smell like apple cider vinegar.

While scraps ferment faster in higher temperatures, this may produce an unpleasant smell, so best keep your bin in a moderately cool spot.

## ② The perfect home



### **Choose a place that suits you**

Don't be afraid to move it outdoors if the smell becomes unpleasant.

## ③ A balanced diet

Bokashi enzymes aren't as fussy as worms so you can feed them almost any food scraps, but there are a few things to avoid.

### ③ A balanced diet



#### Things to add

You can feed your bin most food scraps, including fruit and vegetables, cooked food leftovers, meat without large bones (cooked or uncooked), small bones, non-plastic tea bags, old flowers, tissues, and almost anything that comes from your kitchen.

### ③ A balanced diet



#### Things to avoid

Avoid large amounts of liquids, and avoid large bones, garden waste, and pet poo entirely.

## ④ Feeding your Bokashi

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It's easy to feed a bokashi bin whether it's under the kitchen sink, in the garage, or outside. The best way is to store scraps and expired food in a kitchen caddy or other container, then empty them into your bokashi bin in layers of about 3-5cm, followed by 4-5 sprays of enzyme accelerator.

The enzyme will help minimise odour and kickstart the fermentation process.



### Chop!

For optimal fermentation, chop scraps into small chunks, spreading them in even layers about 3-5cm thick (for larger amounts of scraps, you can repeat these steps multiple times). This will maximise surface area for bacteria to rapidly ferment your scraps.

## ④ Feeding your Bokashi



### Spray!

Cover scraps evenly with 4-5 sprays of enzyme accelerator, included with all Compost Revolution bokashi bins.

## ④ Feeding your Bokashi



### Smash!

Smash the scraps down as much as possible every time you add them to your bin to push excess air up out of your scraps and excess liquid down. A potato masher is ideal but anything with a flat surface that keeps your hand out of the scraps will work.

## ④ Feeding your Bokashi



### Seal!

Be sure to close the lid tightly to minimise ventilation. If fermenting scraps come into contact with too much air, they may rot aerobically instead of ferment anaerobically, slowing decomposition and producing an unpleasant smell.

## ④ Feeding your Bokashi



### Did you know?

The contents should have a fruity smell, not unlike mild apple cider vinegar. Don't worry if you see white mould in the bin - that's a good thing and a sign it's working.

The original blend of micro-organisms used in the first bokashi bins was developed by Professor Teruo Higa, who believed that agriculture had come to rely too heavily on the use of chemicals, and wanted to find a better approach where micro-organisms could be used to help with plant growth.

It's also a natural drain cleaner in its undiluted form. You can pour a little down the sink once a month to help prevent algae buildup. The good bacteria will also help to clean our waterways.

## 5 Bokashi juice fertiliser

As scraps break down, they will produce a nitrogen-rich liquid packed with micro-organisms: bokashi juice! Drain liquid through the tap on the side of your bin at least once or twice a week.

## 5 Bokashi Juice fertiliser



### Juicy!

Bokashi juice is highly concentrated and great for fertilising plants. Dilute 1 small cup of bokashi juice into a 10 litre bucket of water (it should be the colour of weak tea) and your plants will love you for it.

## 5 Bokashi Juice fertiliser



### Tips

**Holidays** – If you leave town for work or holidays you can leave your bokashi bin to ferment. You may want to add extra enzyme spray or grain, and check that the lid is tight.

**Timing** – The longer it ferments, the faster it will break down once buried in soil or a compost bin. Generally, your scraps will fully ferment after 4 weeks.

## 6 Avoiding problems

It's normal for bokashi bins to smell slightly acidic. If it smells bad then your scraps are probably rotting instead of fermenting.

## 6 Avoiding problems



### If your bin smells bad

Bury your rotting waste in at least 10cm of soil in the ground or a large pot of soil, wash the bin thoroughly, and start again!

## 6 Avoiding problems



### Did you know?

To avoid bad smells make sure you:

- ✓ Close the lid tightly
- ✓ Add enough enzyme spray
- ✓ Tap out bokashi juice frequently
- ✓ Keep the bin in a relatively cool area

## 6 Avoiding problems



### White mould

This is normal and a by-product of good bacteria breeding. You don't need to change anything.

## 6 Avoiding problems



### Black or blue-green mould

This means your waste is rotting instead of fermenting. Follow the instructions above under "If your bin smells bad".

## 7 When the bin is full

## 7 When the bin is full

It usually takes a household of 4 people who eat at home most nights about 3-4 weeks to fill a 15-20 litre bokashi bin. When your bokashi bin is full you can either leave it to ferment further (and start filling another bin), or empty it. There are a couple of different ways to do this. Also remember to wash out your bin between uses!



### Bury it

Bury fermented scraps in at least 10cm of soil in the ground or in a large pot, or mix it into a compost bin. It will then break down into the soil in about 10 days, providing your garden with nitrogen, nutrients, microbes and enzymes.

## 7 When the bin is full



### Tips

**Location** – Be sure to bury fermented scraps away from the roots of plants, particularly young plants.

**Size** – A hole of 20-25cms is deep enough. Mix the fermented scraps with soil, and add a layer of soil on top to fill the hole. It's also a good idea to spread the bokashi scraps out so they are not too concentrated in a single place.

## 7 When the bin is full



### Put it in a garden compost bin

If you have an outdoor compost bin, the partially composted solids from your bokashi bin will fit right in. Remember to mix an equal amount of carbon-based materials like dry leaves and newspaper in with the bokashi scraps to maintain a healthy balance of nitrogen and carbon in your compost bin.

## 7 When the bin is full



### Gift it to a friend or community garden

If you live in an apartment without access to ground space, you can bury fermented scraps in a large pot of soil, give it to a friend or community garden's soil or compost bin.

## 7 When the bin is full



### Tips

- ✓ Another option is to get in touch with a fellow composter through ShareWaste.
- ✓ Not only will you be their new best friend but you may even get a tasty reward – as some people even trade compost and bokashi for produce from community gardens.

## 7 When the bin is full



### Tips

- ✓ In order to minimise unpleasant odours or blue-green mould in your bokashi bin, try emptying it every 3 weeks even if it's not completely full.
- ✓ If you find you are filling up the bin too quickly, or want your scraps to break down more before emptying them out, consider getting a second bin and rotating between bins. While one is being filled, the other can continue to ferment. Just remember to keep tapping off the bokashi juice for both bins. You can purchase a second Bokashi bin [here](#) if you need it.

## Recycle your food scraps!

Get a discounted compost bin or worm farm from your council and reduce what you send to landfill by half.

Composting at home is easy to do and avoids transporting food scraps to landfill where they produce harmful greenhouse gases as they break down. Our quick tutorial will show you how to recycle your food scraps, reduce your environmental footprint and make rich fertiliser for your garden.

[www.compostrevolution.com.au](http://www.compostrevolution.com.au)

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