

# Woodlands Nurseries

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## CREATE A WORMERY!

**When** Autumn

**What you need** Large glass container with lid with air holes  
(either a special wormery or large glass jars or vases)  
Gravel or small stones  
Garden soil  
Fine sand  
Vegetable peelings and garden leaves  
Worms from the garden  
Dark paper and a cool dark cupboard

### About this project

This project will introduce your children to the concept of recycling while showing them how worms turn organic matter into fertile soil. Worms have been conditioning our planet's soil for millions of years, processing plant waste, aerating the soil and producing fertiliser. Charles Darwin studied them for years and said the life on earth would not be possible without them!

It is important that the contents remain moist but not too wet, or dry, as worms breathe through their skin and must remain moist to absorb oxygen from the air. The project should only last for a few weeks, after which the worms should be returned to the garden.

### What to do

1. Place the small stones or gravel at the bottom of the container. This ensures that it does not become water logged which would suffocate the worms.
2. Add a layer of garden soil and then a layer of sand. Continue adding alternate layers until the container is  $\frac{3}{4}$  full. The layers will help you see how the worms move around and dig tunnels.
3. Add vegetable peelings such as carrot, potato, apple and garden leaves that the worms can feed on.
4. Find worms from the garden. Carefully add them to the wormery and watch them wriggle through.
5. Place dark paper around the wormery to prevent light entering and put a secure lid on the top with air holes in.
6. Place the container somewhere dark and cool. This will stimulate the worms to tunnel and mix up the layers.
7. Add food scraps as necessary. Try different fruit such as grapes, vegetables, tea leaves, bread and cereals to see which kind of food the worms prefer.

### Tips

- Observe your wormery in dimly lit conditions and always remember to replace the dark covers when you are not studying the worms.
- Through the sides of the wormery you will see worms eating their way through the soil to produce burrows, eating the food from the surface and dragging some down into the burrows.