



Bokashi Bucket Instructions

1. Place your **Bokashi Bucket** somewhere close to where your food waste is produced - either on the kitchen bench or under the sink.
2. Place the drain plate supplied with the kit at the bottom of the bin. This allows excess liquid to drain into the bottom of the bin.
3. Sprinkle a small amount (handful) of **Bokashi** onto the drain plate in the bottom of the bin.
4. Add your food waste to the bin as you produce it. Anything you produce in the kitchen can be added - bread, citrus, vegetable scraps, egg shells, small amounts of paper, even meat.
5. At the end of each day, compress the waste in the bucket with a mashing utensil or similar, to remove any air pockets, and compact the material.
6. Add a small sprinkle (handful) of **Bokashi** over the food waste so that the entire surface area is covered.
7. Reseal the airtight lid.
8. Once or twice a week, drain the liquid from the bin into the cup provided. You can dilute this with water at about 1:100 ratio, and water it onto your lawn or garden beds. Alternatively, you can add the undiluted liquid directly to your septic system where it will improve its efficiency.
9. Repeat the process until the bucket is full. For an average family, this will take about 3 or 4 weeks.
10. When the bucket is full, empty the contents into a small hole or trench in your garden. The waste material will be fermented, but it will not be broken down at this stage - it needs to go into the soil to physically break down into humus (soil).
11. Rinse the bucket with water (no detergent or soap), drain and repeat the whole process.
12. In 2 to 3 weeks, the waste you have buried will then be mostly broken down into soil, and will be rich with nutrients, microbes and enzymes, all naturally produced.

NOTE: The waste material will not break down in the bucket - it will only ferment it. The physical break down of the waste will only begin when you empty the bucket into the soil - and because it is already fermented, it will break down very quickly.

NOTE: You can leave your **Bokashi Bucket** even when you go away on holidays - just make sure that the lid is sealed, you've added a layer of Bokashi, and the drain has been emptied. The longer you leave the bucket to ferment, the "sweeter" the material will be when you return.

NOTE: Be careful NOT to allow pets to eat the fermented waste. While there is nothing harmful in Bokashi, partially decomposed foodwaste can cause harm to some pets.

Frequently Asked Questions

How does the system work?

The Bokashi Bucket uses beneficial microbes to FERMENT organic waste, rather than compost it. The end result is a fermented (or pickled) mass of waste which can go straight into the soil. There's no need to compost the material, AND it doesn't smell!

How much Bokashi do I use?

Just a light sprinkle over the top of the waste in the bucket. As long as the surface area is covered, that is enough. The 1 kg bag of Bokashi should last the average household about 3 – 4 weeks.

Are the beneficial microbes safe?

Absolutely. The types of microbes used are those already found in many types of food, including cheeses, wines and yoghurts, and all produced right here in Australia.

How long will it take to fill the bucket?

Most households will take about 3 to 4 weeks to fill the bucket, after which time the contents should be fully fermented.

How much does it cost to run?

Refiller packs of Bokashi cost \$15.00 per 3 kg (\$5.00 per kg) and 1 kg will last the average household about 4 weeks. So this works out at less than \$1.00 per week to run, which is a very economical way of obtaining 20 kg of totally natural fertiliser every 3-4 weeks!

What can I do with the material when the bucket is full?

There are a number of things you can do. First, you can bury the contents of the bucket directly into your garden. Just cover it up with soil or mulch (covered by at least 6" of soil), and in a few weeks, it will have broken down into rich fertiliser for the soil. Then, when the bucket is full again, you can do the same thing in a different part of the garden. Alternatively, you can place the contents into your worm farm (but be sure to give them small amounts first so they get used to it) or directly into an outside compost bin (ensure that you have placed some soil or mulch on top to keep it airtight)

Is fermenting better than compost?

Compost is a very good source of nutrients for your garden, but because of the composting process, much of the goodness is lost. Fermented waste, however, retains all of the energy (no heat loss) and most of the nutrients in the waste, so that all of this material is available to your plants. Also, fermented waste has the bonus of providing beneficial microbes to your garden, and this will over time produce amazing results.

Is fermenting good for the environment?

Fermenting waste is far, far better than composting. Greenhouse gas emissions are greatly reduced during fermentation, there are no insect or rodent problems, and the end product is extremely valuable as a soil conditioner and fertiliser. Also, the process retains all the energy (not released to the atmosphere) and all the water is retained and not evaporated.

How often do I need to add Bokashi?

At the end of each day IF you have added waste to the bucket.

Why is my Bokashi growing white mould?

Bokashi contains living microbes and if the microbes are exposed to the air they will start to grow. This will not diminish its efficiency. Ensure that you have zip locked the top of the bag and expressed all air out through the round valve in back of bag.

What if the bucket starts to smell?

Check that the lid is being replaced tightly, and that you have covered the surface area of the waste with Bokashi. Also, make sure the liquid is drained off via the tap. Finally, make sure that the waste has been compacted down with a masher or similar, to ensure there are no air pockets. If the waste is too smelly, simply empty the waste into your garden, rinse the bucket in water (no detergent) and start again.

Do I need to wash the bucket when I empty it?

Yes, but just with fresh water. Do not use soap or detergents, as these will kill the microbes. Remember to line the bucket with a thin layer of Bokashi before you start adding waste.

How often should I drain the liquid?

Every three days or so, or more if you are getting a lot of liquid draining off.

What can I do with the liquid?

This liquid is teeming with microbes and nutrients! You can dilute it and use this directly on your garden or pot plants: dilute 1:1000 for foliar spray or 1:200 for lawns and garden beds. Or, if you have a septic system, you can add the liquid undiluted to the toilet or septic tank. The microbes will work to make the septic system more efficient. Or, you can simply tip it down the sink – the microbes will go to work on your drains and keep them clean.

How much liquid will I get from the bucket?

The amount of liquid that you get will be totally dependent on the type of waste you have put in - lots of fruit will produce lots of liquid, but if you have lots of cooked food, vegetables etc, then you'll get less. The amount of liquid you get is not an indicator of whether the system is working, and you won't get any more (or less) liquid by increasing (or decreasing) the amount of Bokashi you add.

How can I order more Bokashi?

You can obtain Bokashi from Growing Vitality by mail order all around Australia. Please contact us for your order.

What if I go on holidays?

Simply drain the liquid from the bucket, make sure there is a cover of Bokashi on the waste, and that the lid is firmly sealed. Then forget about it! While you are gone, the microbes will keep the waste odour free.

What can I put in the bucket?

Any type of organic matter produced in the kitchen. So this means you can add vegetable scraps, tea leaves, tea bags, small amounts of paper, coffee grounds, even onions, citrus and garlic, even meat scraps.

What can I NOT put in the bucket?

Do not put dog or cat faeces in the Bokashi Bucket as these are a human health risk.

How do I know if it's working?

The only test on whether the system is working is the absence of the rotting odour. If there is no such odour, then the fermenting bugs must be doing their job in fermenting the waste. Normally, waste left in a bucket will go foul within a day or two, and if this is not happening then you are doing everything right.

The waste hasn't broken down in the bucket. What's wrong?

The Bokashi bucket will NOT decompose the material while the material is in the bucket - it will only ferment (or pickle) it. If you can imagine a pickled onion - it will still look like an onion, but because it's pickled, it will have changed its internal structure. The single criterion to determine if the process is working is the odour - if there's no rotting odour, then the fermentation process is working. **The physical decomposition into humus only occurs once the fermented material goes into the soil.** Here, it breaks down very quickly because the material has been pre-conditioned (i.e. fermented) and should turn into humus/soil within a couple of weeks (varies a bit with soil temperature).

Prices

Bokashi Bucket Kit	\$99.00
2 Bucket Kit	\$178.00
3 kg Bokashi Granules	\$15

To order your Bokashi Bucket or extra Bokashi please phone Growing Vitality on 03 59759032 or email growingvitality@yahoo.com.au

For more information please visit the website at www.growingvitality.com.au

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