

Bokashi Bucket Fact Sheet



Turning food scraps (all types) into nutrient rich soil conditioner

opportunity >> growth >> lifestyle



What is Bokashi?

Bokashi is a Japanese word meaning “fermented organic matter”. A Bokashi bucket is a sealed airtight container which can be used to ferment food scraps, creating a nutrient rich soil conditioner. A Bokashi bucket is a safe and convenient way for households wanting to compost their food waste and be part of the solution in reducing food waste ending up at landfill.

How does a Bokashi work?

Fermented grains (usually a combination of barley, wheat and/or rice) or a Bokashi spray can be added to food scraps in your Bokashi bucket, which can be kept inside or out. The microbes in the Bokashi will break down the food scraps by fermenting it. This process takes place without oxygen, is much quicker than composting and produces less greenhouse gas emissions. The end product is a nutrient rich soil conditioner which can be buried in the garden or added to the compost.

What can and can't I add to my Bokashi bucket?

Most kitchen food waste can be added to your Bokashi bucket, but liquids and packaging are best left out:

What to add to your Bokashi bucket	What NOT to add to your Bokashi bucket
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Fruit and vegetable scraps, including<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Onions and garlic• Citrus• Coffee grounds• Tea leaves and paper based tea bags✓ Cooked and uncooked meat and fish✓ Bread and pasta✓ Biscuits, cakes and deserts✓ Eggs and dairy (e.g. cheese)✓ Coffee grounds✓ Leftover meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">× Liquids, such as water, milk or fruit juice× Packaging× Foil or plastic wrap× Rotten or mouldy foods× Foods contaminated with any sort of chemical

While rotten and mouldy foods will ferment in a Bokashi bucket, the spores can be bad for your health. It's therefore best to leave them out.

How do I Bokashi my food scraps?

You can Bokashi your food scraps by following these ten easy steps:

1. Add Bokashi grains or a few squirts of Bokashi spray to the bottom of the Bokashi bucket
2. Place food scraps chopped into pieces no more than 3-4 cm thick in the Bokashi bucket
3. Sprinkle a handful of Bokashi grain over the top or cover with Bokashi spray
4. Press down the food scraps each time to reduce the amount of trapped oxygen
5. Place the lid back on to deter insects, rodents and reduce smell
6. Drain liquid from the bottom of the bucket once or twice a week
 - This liquid can be diluted and added to your garden or pot plants as fertiliser
7. Continue to repeat steps 2-5 until the Bokashi bucket is full
8. Add a final layer of Bokashi and let the contents ferment and reduce in size for up to 10-14 days, continuing to drain off the liquid regularly
9. Place contents in a 20-25 cm deep hole in the garden and cover with soil or add to a compost heap
10. Rinse bucket and start again

Empty your Bokashi bucket before going away on holidays. Alternatively, drain the liquid and cover the food scraps with a thick layer of Bokashi grains before you leave.

How do I know if it's working?

If your food scraps are fermenting they will look pickled. They won't start decomposing until they are in the soil.

With the lid on, your Bokashi bucket shouldn't smell. If it does smell, refer to the trouble shooting information below.

Trouble shooting tips:

If your Bokashi develops a strong odour or contains black or blue fungi, it may be because:

- The lid has not been tightly closed after each use
- The food waste added was rotten or mouldy
- Not enough Bokashi grains or spray has been added
- The liquid hasn't been drained often enough
- There has been prolonged exposure to sunlight or extreme heat or cold

Place this contaminated Bokashi in a hole in the garden, cover with Bokashi grains or spray, and then fill the hole with soil.

Where can I purchase a Bokashi bucket?

Search online or Council's [Business Directory](#) to find a store that sells Bokashi buckets, grains and sprays.