

# Wormeries

## Tried & tested



Consumer editor **Julia Heaton** digs deep this week to discover which of four wormery units provide the best compost results

GARDENING TRENDS come and go but composting is here to stay. A niche market has arisen selling wormery composters. The worms are silent do-gooders, wriggling and munching through green waste to producing a rich worm cast compost (vericompost) and liquid (leachate) which is diluted to make a fantastic liquid feed.

This week I'm testing four models, two of the three plastic units operate by having three rotational compost trays sitting on top of each other. When all three

trays are full the bottom one is emptied and becomes the top working tray. The third plastic unit resembles a landfill bin and the fourth one is a giant wooden composter. All wormeries need more attention than a straight forward composter. This is to ensure the worms stay healthy and working hard. Basically, in order to thrive, the compost should not be too wet or dry or acidic, and the wormeries should be insulated against freezing and stood out of direct sunlight.

### COMPLETE ROT FOR GRASS

ANYONE WITH a lawn is likely to have plenty of grass clippings over the coming months. So how can you dispose of them? Of course, you can simply leave them where they fall so that they act as a mulch and help to retain moisture in your lawn, but this does look a little messy.

Composting it is a great idea but, grass used in quantity in compost bins can turn into a slimy mess. However, there are ways of helping it on its way. Complete Rot For Grass, for example, is made from restructured organic waste material and contains the enzymes and free carbon necessary to balance out the nitrogen in clippings. You will need 2lb (1kg) to every 13lb (6kg) of clippings; simply mix together well before adding to your wormery or conventional composter, and keep clippings covered in case of rain. You can even tear up the bag and put that in your wormery too.

■ COMPLETE ROT for grass is available in 11lbs (5kg) or 27lbs 8oz (12.5kg) bags and costs from £6.50 from Wiggly Wigglers. Visit [wigglywigglers.co.uk](http://wigglywigglers.co.uk) or alternatively call (01981) 500391.



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£87.00 P&P £6.95  
**WORMCITY WORMERY**  
 (75 LITRE)  
 ☎ 08000 141598  
 🌐 [WORMCITY.CO.UK](http://WORMCITY.CO.UK)

#### BUILD ★★★★★

A beehive shaped wormery made from recycled, UV protected plastic. Easy to understand instructions had the unit up and running in no time. And it includes a useful troubleshooting section.

#### FEATURES ★★★★★

Three composting trays sit on top of a sump for draining off the liquid. A stand is included so that the whole thing is raised off the ground – useful when it comes to draining off the liquid. Also includes mixed composting worms, coir block and a bag of worm food.

#### PERFORMANCE ★★★★★

It took a couple of weeks for some of the worms to stay at home after which they produced excellent compost and some liquid. The rotation tray system was efficient and the unit easily transported.

#### VALUE ★★★★★

Great portability and design combined with good performance makes this wormery good value.



13/20

£55.00  
 + £35 1KG WORMS (FREE P&P)  
**CAN-O-WORMS**  
 🌐 [WIGGLYWIGGLERS.CO.UK](http://WIGGLYWIGGLERS.CO.UK)  
 ☎ (01981) 500391

#### BUILD ★★★★★

Compact, saucer shaped, 50ltr design made from recycled plastic with a precise set up and troubleshooting instruction book.

#### FEATURES ★★★★★

Comes with three working trays, a vented lid, five legs and sump with drain tap. The cone in the collector sump allows stray worms to climb back into the bottom working tray.

#### PERFORMANCE ★★

The shape of this wormery meant that it was easily transportable. However the worms inside never seemed to settle and a local blackbird happily set up home under the unit, feasting for days as the little creatures dropped down from heaven.

#### VALUE ★★★★★

Just a shame that most of the worms ended up inside my unhelpful blackbird. Never mind, there are still some in the wormery who look happy so hopefully this one will rise from the ashes.



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£52.95 P&P £5.82  
**THE ORIGINAL WORMERY**  
**ORIGINAL ORGANICS**  
 ☎ 0808 120 9676  
 🌐 [ORIGINALORGANICS.CO.UK](http://ORIGINALORGANICS.CO.UK)

#### BUILD ★★★

Resembling a mini-wheellie bin without wheels, this 100 ltr all-in-one unit needs little assembly. Made from plastic apart from its brass aeration vents.

#### FEATURES ★★★

Has a hinged sealed lid with handle for easy opening. But you'll need to spend a bit more for its dedicated stand. If siting it outside however, a few house bricks will do the job just the same. Includes worms and a lime mix to reduce acidity.

#### PERFORMANCE ★★★

It took the worms a fair time to settle down as many of them seemed to think they were better off at night by squeezing out of the secure lid and parking themselves under my son's trainers. Eventually they did settle and the bin provided good compost and liquid feed.

#### VALUE ★★★★★

Great value but some users may be put off by having to empty the whole thing when it's full.



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£189.95  
 + £39.95 1KG WORMS (P&P £4.95)  
**COMPOSTER / WORMERY**  
 ☎ 0845 402 5300  
 🌐 [HARROD HORTICULTURAL.COM](http://HARROD HORTICULTURAL.COM)

#### BUILD ★★★★★

While the instructions are detailed for this flat pack it's still a two person job. The wood gives it rustic charm and solidity.

#### FEATURES ★★★

At 203ltrs it's the largest of all the wormeries on trial. Four sliding panels give access to the compost and two individually hinged lids allow for adding scraps and general maintenance. To prevent water logging there's a free draining base and the liquid fertiliser is channelled into a drip tray.

#### PERFORMANCE ★★★★★

All the worms seemed immediately at home and it was the fastest of the four to produce compost. I can only put this down to a set of very happy worms and their preference for a wooden container.

#### VALUE ★★★★★

A rather hefty price tag and a bit of self assembly is outweighed by its beauty, capacity and outstanding performance.