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## How To Make Your Own Pet Waste Compost Bin



After a few chilly days, a warm sunny day arrived! I threw open my windows and waited for that sweet sea breeze to weave its way through the house. But a few moments later....ewwwwww.

A most *awful* smell.

I have an enclosed cat run down one side of my house. My little house panther Jinx, uses it when she needs to go to the bathroom, to have a few moments peace from Frida the Chihuahua or just bask in some outside air and sunshine.

Now, all the bedrooms that were next to the cat run, frankly, smelt like a stale litter tray when I opened the windows. Not very pleasant!

Jinx likes to go in the one spot, near the strawberry guava bush. She is usually a good puss who buries all her business, but obviously, she has changed her ways!

So this pet poo problem was the prompt I needed to finally install something I had been meaning to do for a while. A pet waste compost bin.

Why Pet Waste Needs its own Compost Bin.

reasoning behind this rule is simply one of disease.

Dogs and cats can spread a number of zoonotic **diseases** (an illness that can be transferred from **pets** to humans) such as Toxoplasmosis, hookworms, roundworms, threadworms, campylobacteriosis, giardia, and coccidia. Nasty stuff!

Pet faeces should be kept far away from your edibles as possible! Even if your dog or cat goes on the lawn, *the same lawn your kids and family play on*, you are going to want to dispose of it safely.

There is no way to be certain that your compost pile gets hot enough to kill all the pathogens that may exist in the animal waste, and you don't want to accidentally spread poo onto your lettuces or tomatoes.

## Wait, Can't I just Flush Pet Waste?

Please, no. Even a low flush toilet still uses about 5 litres of water. That's a huge volume of water for a little poo. Multiplied over a year, it could be as much as 2000 litres of clean water spent on pet waste.

Luckily, there is a way to safely compost and dispose of pet waste. A pet waste compost bin.

## How to Make Your Own Pet Waste Compost Bin.

You will need

- A bucket with a lid (I used this 7-litre volume one from Kmart for \$5.50)
- A drill
- Sawdust, Cat litter, shredded paper, leaf litter or lawn clippings
- Optional: compost worms and garden lime

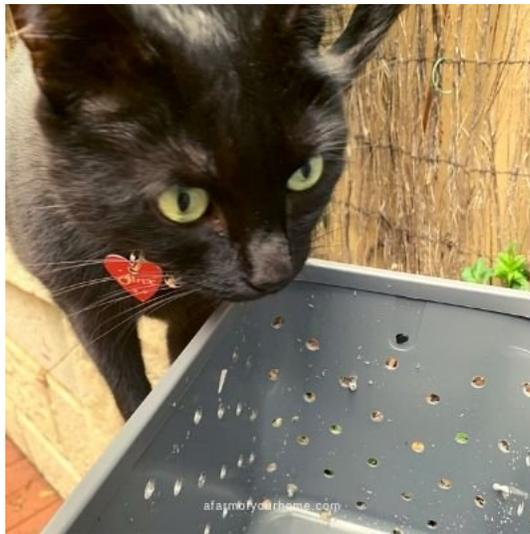
### Preparation

My bucket has a built-in lid which is very handy! This 7-litre bucket is a fair size for the combined contributions of my cat and chihuahua. If you have larger animals, upscale!

Drill plenty of large holes in the sides and bottom of the bucket.



As you can see, Jinx is very curious. Husband commented that it would be great if we could teach her to lift the lid and deposit her waste directly into the bin. *Wouldn't that be great?* If you have the time and a more co-operative cat, I wish you all the best in that endeavour! In my case, Jinx is notoriously resistant to any kind of training or human persuasion.



Sink your pet waste bucket into the ground deep enough to bury the bucket, but expose the lid.



Start with a layer of leaf litter, shredded paper, sawdust or cat litter.

Add your pet waste. Do not touch your pet waste! As you can see, I have fashioned a scoop using a recycled plastic bottle that does a great job of scooping up cat business.

Add another layer of leaf litter, shredded paper sawdust or cat litter. Here, I added some compost worms that I could spare from my worm farm.



Close the lid, and wash your hands ASAP.

## How to Maintain Your Pet Waste Compost Bin

Repeat the layering of organic matter each time you add the pet waste. I have added compost worms to my bin to accelerate the process. From time to time, I will also add a handful of comfrey to also hasten the decomposition.

A well-managed pet waste compost bin shouldn't smell. If your pet waste bin is stinky, sprinkle on some garden or dolomite lime. When it is too dry, and not breaking down, add some water or fresh grass clippings.



Should your pet compost waste bin get full, lift it from its position, tip the waste into the remaining hole and cover the waste with soil and mulch. Do not plant the spot with edibles for at least 2 years.

Then, reposition your pet waste compost bin and repeat the process.

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My pet waste compost bin is in the cat run for ease of use, *I don't want to be ferrying cat poop through my house!* One would work brilliantly in a rose garden, or any spot in your garden that is not already planted with edibles. In my yard, almost every bed has edibles!

You could even use this bin in a bed with your edibles, just add organic compost and worms and let the goodness soak into the surrounding soil!

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