Basic compost bin construction
3-bin System

The 3-bin system requires a minimum 3' x 9' of yard space. This system is excellent for hot composting with removable front slats for easy turning, and separate bins for turning and aging compost, and/or storing compostables. Large amounts of compost can be produced using this bin. Carpentry skills needed for construction. Budget $250 to $300 for new materials, or better yet, use salvaged materials.

MATERIALS

- ☐ 2 x 4" wood: 31 ½"(8), 36"(8), 9' (4), and 29"(4)
- ☐ 2 x 6" wood: 36" (4)
- ☐ 2 x 2" wood: 34 1/2" (6), 9' (1), and 29" (4)
- ☐ 1 x 6" wood: 31" (19)
- ☐ ¼" mesh hardware cloth: 30' x 3'
- ☐ Carriage bolts: 3 1/2" x 3/8" (12), with washers and nuts
- ☐ 12 penny galvanized nails (2 lbs.)
- ☐ 8 penny galvanized nails (1 lb.)
- ☐ Poultry wire staples (1 lb.)
- ☐ Corrugated fiberglass: 4 oz. 8' x 26" (2)
- ☐ Gasketed roofing nails: (40)
- ☐ Wiggle molding: 18'
- ☐ 3" hinges, zinc plated, galvanized or brass (3)
- ☐ 4" flat corner braces with 1" wood screws (4)
- ☐ 4" flat T-braces with 1" wood screws (4)
- ☐ Hook eyes (4)
- ☐ Light cable or chain: 8'

TOOLS

Power saw or hand saw, drill with 3/8" and 1/16" bits, screwdriver, hammer, tin snips, tape measure, pencil, socket or wrench, carpenter's square. Use proper eye, ear and body protection.

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ASSEMBLY

Main Structure

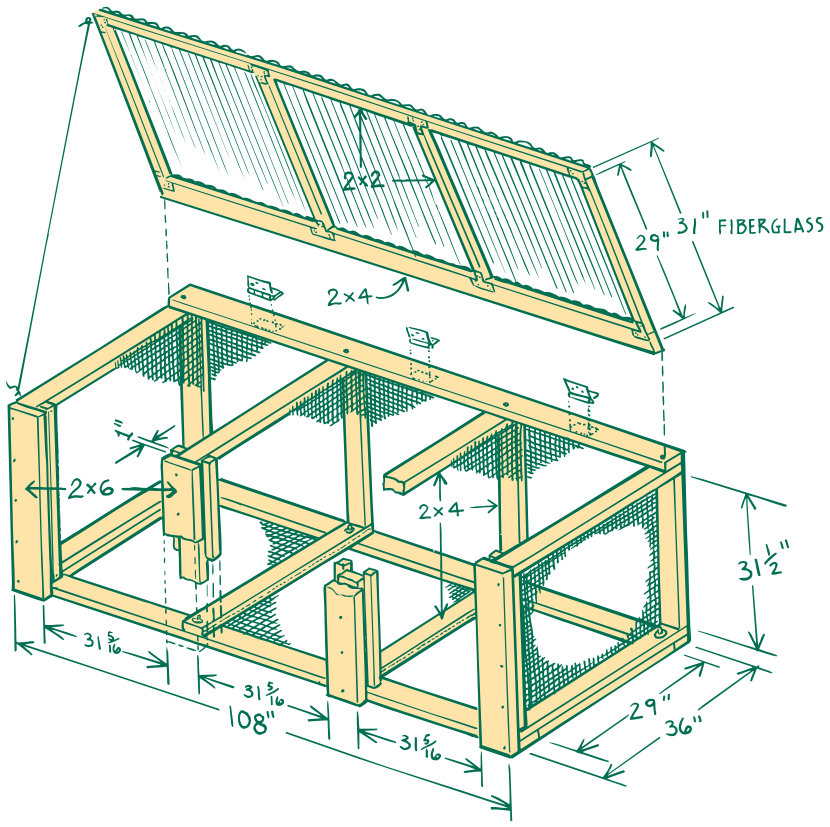
Nail two 31 1/2" and two 36" 2 x 4s together with 12 penny nails to form each of four screen dividers. Cut four 36 x 33 1/2" wire mesh pieces, and staple every four inches to frames after checking frames for squareness. Bolt dividers to three 9' 2 x 4s as shown. Inside measurement between dividers should be 31 5/16". Nail 29" 2 x 4s as shown. Staple one 9' x 3' piece of wire mesh every four inches to back of structure, and one 9' x 3' piece to the bottom.

Slats and Slat Tracks

Nail 2 x 6s to front of dividers. Nail 34 1/2" 2 x 2s onto frames as shown. Leave at least one inch for the slats to slide in. The last slat of each bin section may need to be cut lengthwise to fit.

Lid

Assemble lid frame as shown with flat corner and T-braces on the bottom side. Pre-drill nail holes every couple of feet into wiggle molding humps, and attach molding to 9' 2 x 2s and 9' 2 x 4 with 8 penny nails. Cut fiberglass into five 32" pieces with tin snips. Pre-drill fiberglass and wiggle molding on top of every third hump, and nail together with gasketed nails. Be sure to overlay fiberglass pieces at least one channel wide. Trim off excess fiberglass before attaching the last piece. Attach lid to frame with hinges. Attach light cable or chain to lid and main frame with hook eyes as shown to prevent lid from overextending.



Basic compost bin construction
Wood and wire compost bin

Use this bin for basic "Add as You Go" or "Batch" composting. The bin has two front doors for easy harvesting and turning, a top that doubles as a sifter, and a full wire mesh lining. Small to large amounts of compost can be produced. Carpentry skills are needed for construction. Budget $150 to $200 for new materials, or better yet, use salvaged materials.

MATERIALS

- ☐ 1 x 6" wood: 8' (8)
- ☐ 2 x 4" wood: 8' (2)
- ☐ 2 x 4" wood: 10' (1)
- ☐ 1 x 4" wood: 6' (3)
- ☐ 1/4" wire mesh hardware cloth: 15' x 3'
- ☐ 5" drawer handles (4)
- ☐ 1 1/2" hooks and eyes (8)
- ☐ 4" corner brackets with 1/2" wood screws (8)
- ☐ Solvent-free, low VOC, waterproof wood glue
- ☐ 8 penny galvanized nails (20+)
- ☐ 6 penny galvanized nails or screws (125+)
- ☐ 3/4" poultry wire staples (250+)

TOOLS

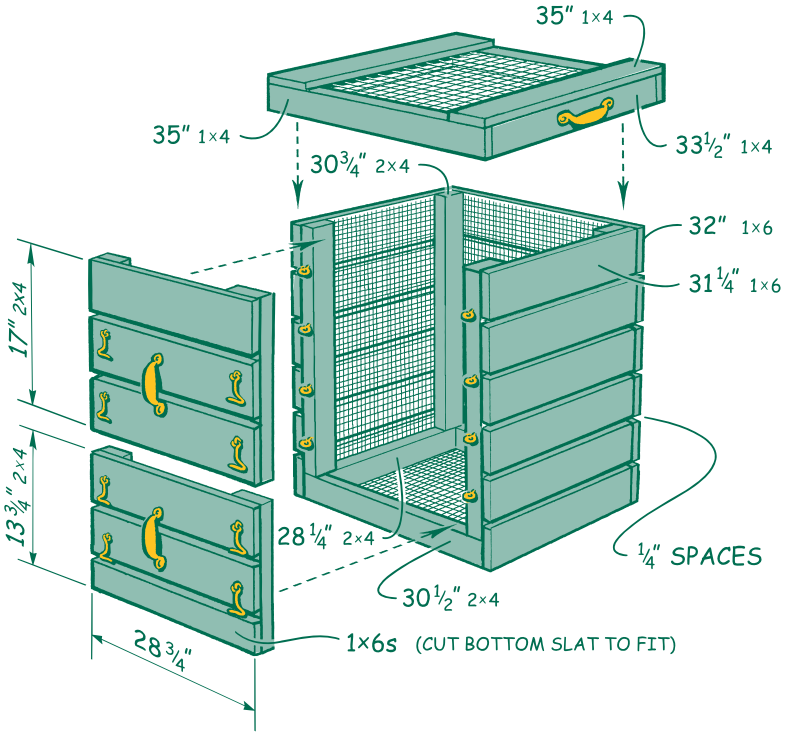
Power saw or handsaw, screwdriver, hammer, measuring tape, pencil, square, drill with 1/16" bit, sandpaper.

Use proper eye, ear and body protection.

ASSEMBLY

Glue all wood pieces before nailing.

1. Nail 2 x 4 bottom frame together with the larger nails. Be sure the finish dimension is 30 1/2 x 31 1/4".
2. Build sides by nailing bottom and top 31 1/4" 1 x 6s to the 2 x 4s (use smaller nails). Be sure bottom 1 x 6s hang down 3 1/2" below 2 x 4 uprights. Fill in the remaining 1 x 6s equally spaced, with no gaps larger than 1/4".
3. Attach sides to base by nailing 3 1/2 " overhang to base as drawn (with smaller nails). Nail 2 x 4 uprights into bottom frame with larger nails.
4. Nail the six 32" 1 x 6s to back by first attaching the top and bottom pieces, then filling in the remaining four, spaced equally.
5. Before cutting pieces for the front doors, measure the actual opening at the front of the bin, and make sure to cut the 1 x 6s just 1/8 to 1/4" smaller than the opening. Build top door by nailing three 1 x 6s to the two 17" 2 x 4s with 1/4" between each board as shown. Build bottom door by first nailing on the top two 1 x 6s (1/4" apart), then measuring the remaining space, and cutting the last 1 x 6 lengthwise to fit.
6. Attach eyes to front 2 x 4 uprights, and hooks to front doors as drawn.
7. Build lid by pre-drilling and tacking together as drawn using smaller nails. Make sure the finished outside dimension is 35 x 35" and is square. Then pre-drill and screw the corner brackets to the inside corners, and the top 1 x 4s into place. Cut a 33 x 36" piece of wire screen and staple it to the inside of the lid.
8. Cut remaining screen to fit. Staple side, back and door pieces inside bin on 1 x 6s (not over 2 x 4s). Staple bottom piece onto the underside of bin.



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Worm bin construction
Wood worm bin

This wood worm bin is used mostly for fruit and vegetable trimmings. The bin may require occasional watering. The bin also doubles as a seat. Basic carpentry skills are needed for construction. Budget $30 to $50 for new materials, or better yet, use salvaged materials.

MATERIALS

- ☐ 4' x 4' piece 1/2" exterior grade non-treated plywood (1)
- ☐ 2 x 2" wood: 6' (3)
- ☐ 2 x 4" wood: 4' (1)
- ☐ 4 penny galvanized nails (1 lb.)
- ☐ Light cable or chain: 16"
- ☐ 1/2" wood screws (2)
- ☐ 2" hinges (2), with 3/4" wood screws (2)
- ☐ Solvent-free, low VOC, waterproof wood glue

TOOLS

Power saw or hand saw, hammer, measuring tape, pencil, square, drill with 1/4" and 3/32" bits, sandpaper.

Use proper eye, ear and body protection.

ASSEMBLY

Glue all wood pieces before nailing.

Base

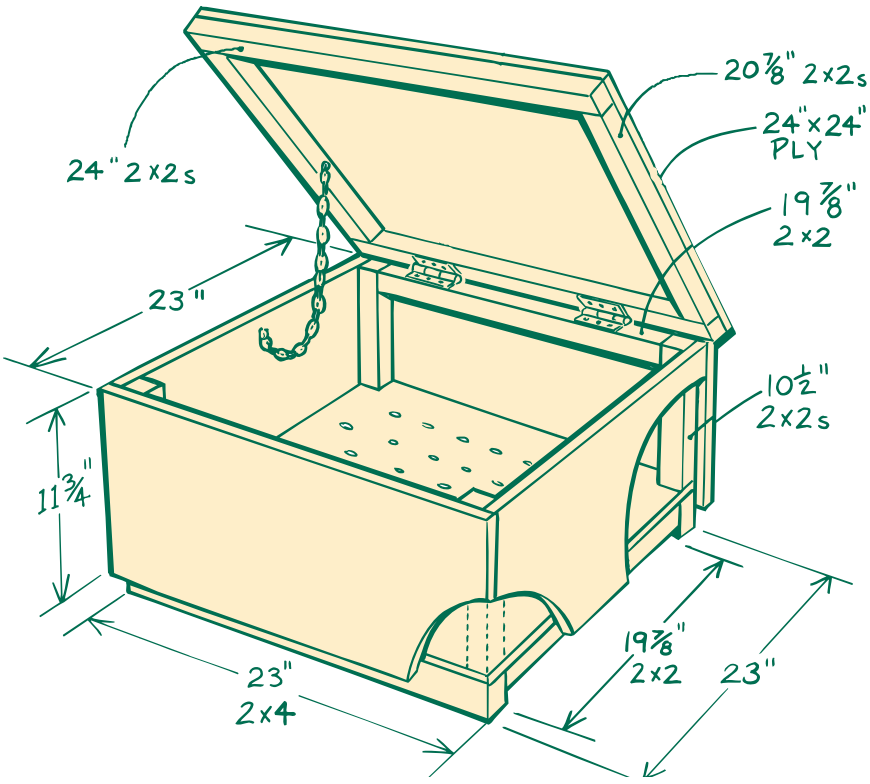
Nail two 23" 2 x 4s and two 19 7/8" 2 x 2s to bottom of 23 x 23" plywood as drawn. Drill at least twenty-four 1/4" holes for drainage.

Side

Front and back walls: Nail the four 2 x 2 uprights to the two side walls along the 11 3/4" edge, with one end of each 2 x 2 flush with the top edge of the walls. Nail a 19 7/8" 2 x 2 hinge support to the top edge of the back wall piece, leaving 1 1/2" on each side for 2 x 2 uprights. Assemble box by nailing the 1 1/4" overhang of the side walls to the 2 x 2s on the base as drawn. Nail the front and back walls to the 2 x 2 uprights and to the 2 x 4s on the base as drawn. Be sure the hinge support is at the top of the bin.

Lid

Nail lid together as drawn. Attach to box with hinges, making sure to pre-drill screw holes into the 2 x 2s and position hinges as drawn. Attach chain with 1/2" wood screws so lid can rest in an opened position.



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Worm bin construction
Plastic worm bin

This bin is used mainly for fruit and vegetable trimmings. It is very easy to build and tidy for indoor use. The plastic bins keep compost moist and will require regular additions of dry bedding. Budget $6 to $20 for new materials, or better yet, use salvaged materials.

MATERIALS

Plastic storage container with a tight fitting lid measuring 12" to 18" tall; 12" x 24" base.

TOOLS

Power drill with 1/4" bit

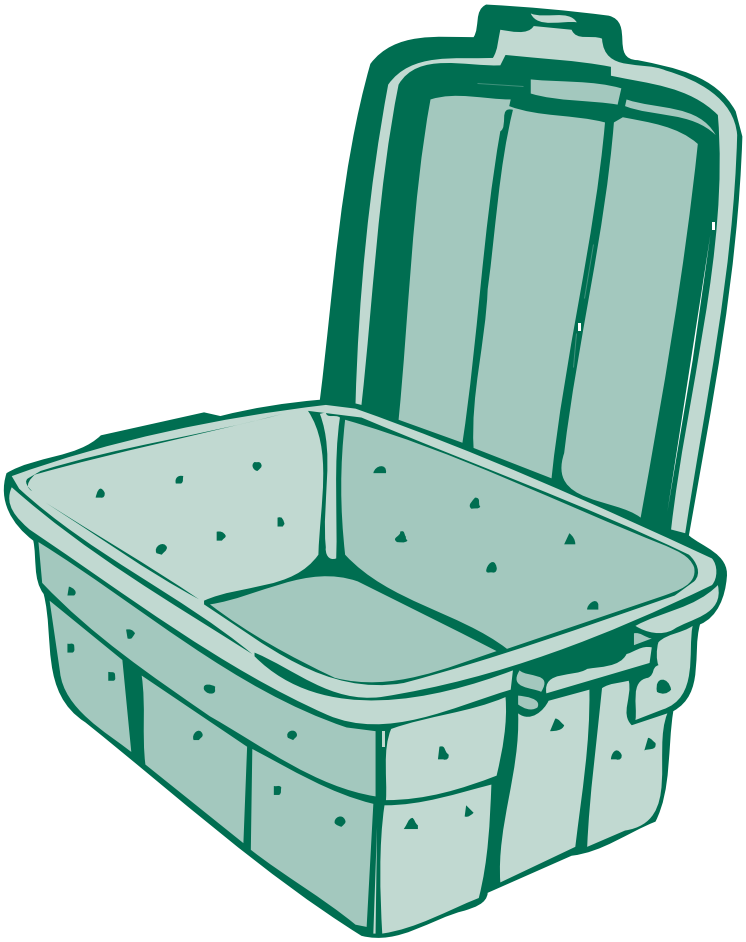
ASSEMBLY

For outdoor use

Drill at least 6 holes per side for ventilation about one-half to three quarters of the way up the sides of the bin. Drill at least 12 holes in the bottom of the bin for drainage.

For indoor use

Drill at least 6 holes per side for ventilation about one-half to three quarters of the way up the sides of the bin. To avoid a future mess from moisture dripping out the bottom of the worm bin, you can either forgo drainage holes, or drill drainage holes and use a second plastic storage bin as a catchment tray. If you forgo the drainage holes, be sure to monitor moisture levels and prevent puddling. When moisture content is high, add dry bedding under and on top of the food and worms to absorb excess moisture.



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