

# Wonders of the Red Wiggler

Worms come in four main tribes with exotic-sounding scientific names:

- > You've got the flatworms - **Platyhelminthes**
- > You've got your ribbon worms - **Nemertea**
- > Then there's the roundworms - **Nematoda**
- > And finally, the segmented worms - **Annelida**

But squirming its way above them all to be first in line for homes in our vermicompost bins is the **Annelida** known as the **Eisenia foetida**, commonly known as the Red Wiggler, brandling, or manure worm (obviously, not picky eaters).

Wonder Worman chose the trusty Red Wigglers to be her Super Composting sidekicks because they:

Are the hardiest worms, have an insatiable appetite for food we humans typically call garbage, and they possess an amazing reproductive capacity.

Yep, these low-maintenance Super Composters are the perfect sidekicks.



Visit [wonderworman.com](http://wonderworman.com) for more information about the Wonders of Super Composting Red Wigglers and to learn about The Legend Of Wonder Worman.



RED WIGGLER  
MERCHANT

## About Composting

Composting is the process of breaking down the decomposed remains of organic matter to produce valuable nutrients like, Nitrogen, Calcium, Magnesium and Potassium. The result of this process is called Compost, which is used to enrich soil around the world.

### Types of Composting

**Hot Composting** occurs by combining material high in Nitrogen such as manure with organic matter in a "hot" environment between 110°-160° F. This type of composting is common among individuals and families who own livestock and reside on large properties.

**Worm Composting** occurs when Red Wigglers are used in a cold compost pile. Cold composting is ideal for Red Wigglers because of the moderate temperature. This type of composting is great for individuals and families in a household environment where space is somewhat limited.

**Cold Composting** occurs when organic matter is left to decompose on its own. This requires little maintenance, but of all the composting methods takes the most time to produce compost.

### Benefits of Composting

By recycling waste, we are reducing the amount of "usable" material we would have placed in the landfill. Compost improves the structure of soil by increasing its ability to retain water.

## ➔ Red Wigglerism

Worm Castings are rich in Nitrogen, Calcium, Magnesium, and Phosphorus.

The castings are coated in polysaccharides which help with soil aeration and water retention. Worm castings will not burn plants, and are odorless and nontoxic.



# Wonder Worman's Quick Guide to Red Wiggling



Visit [wonderworman.com](http://wonderworman.com), or call Laurie - The Red Wiggler Merchant - 541.390.7610 - © Wonder Worman

# How To

do the Red Wiggler

## 1 Get a Bin

Choosing the right bin for you

### Wood Bin

**Plus:** Fun to build and more aesthetic, this is Wonder Woman's bin of choice. It's great for absorbing moisture and has lots of drainage (When making a wood bin make sure to drill holes 3-5 inches apart on the bottom), which helps control humidity and makes it easy to collect the nutrient-rich "worm tea" when the bin is raised off the ground. **Minus:** Will break down - won't last forever. Of course, this biodegradability can also be viewed as a plus, especially if the wood is sustainably harvested and/or recycled.

### Plastic Bins

**Plus:** Typically lighter than wood and easier to move. Can last virtually forever. Many holes provide drainage, and raising the bins off the ground makes it easy to collect nutrient-rich worm tea (more holes are need with plastic than wood, because plastic doesn't absorb moisture). **Minus:** Can create a lot of moisture.

### Compost Pile (Not really a bin)

**Plus:** If you have the space and plenty of waste, piles can be great. Just throw a bunch of organic matter on the pile and let the worms do their thing. **Minus:** Can't be as easily insulated in the winter. Can't collect worm tea.

For more information visit [wonderwoman.com](http://wonderwoman.com) or call Laurie - The Red Wiggler Merchant - 541.390.7610

## 2 Prepare Bedding

Making the bedding just right

### Bedding

Once you've picked out a bin for your Super Composting Red Wiggles, you'll need to make a nice, cozy bed for them to make it their home.

**Peat Moss** and **shredded newspaper** are excellent, commonly available bedding materials. Use one or the other, or a blend of the two. Peat moss breaks down faster than newspaper.

Fill the bin with a 6-9 inch layer of your bedding of choice, then add water to make the bedding damp-sponge wet.

**Watch the moisture level!** If too dry, add more shredded moist newspaper or spray with water. If too moist, check drainage, add more holes and/or add dry newspaper.

Signs your Super Composting Red Wiggles are too wet: They're trying to wiggle out of the bin. They look bloated and white.

## Red Wigglerism

It's important to change the bedding seasonally. Your Super Composting Red Wiggles are strong, but they can die in old bedding.

## Getting Started

First, your Super Composting Red Wiggles need a good home: **A worm bin.** Select the worm bin that's right for your composting needs, then make the bedding for them to wiggle around in. Once your Super Composting Red Wiggles have moved in start feeding them. Check the moisture content every time you feed them to make sure all is well. After 3-4 months you'll have nutrient rich compost for your plants!

Now what? Start all over again! Keep in mind that your Super Composting Red Wiggles will continue to reproduce while they are busy composting. You'll have more Super Composting Red Wiggles than when you started, which means you may want to consider getting another worm bin. But keep in mind that Red Wiggler "colonies" grow in relative to their surrounding, so if one bin is enough for you don't worry about getting over-run by worms, the Super Composting Red Wiggles will keep their population in-check. Go Super Composting Red Wiggles!

## 3 Feed Them

Vegetarians at hearts

### Food

After moving in to their new digs, your Super Composting Red Wiggles will be hungry! Here are some menu items suitable for your waste-fighting wigglers:

**Veggies!** **Worms prefer a vegetarian lifestyle.**

They love all different types of veggies and fruits - watermelon, bananas, cantaloupe, pumpkins, squash. They also have a sweet tooth - the sweeter the food the closer they get and the faster they reproduce!

**Non-Food Items:** Coffee grounds, filters, tea bags, moist newspaper & junk mail, egg shells.

**Foods to Avoid:** Lemons, dairy products (although mine have eaten cheese), meat products, onions only once in a while.

**Remember:** The more you feed your Super Composting Red Wiggles, the more worms you'll have. They can consume their own weight each day in food.

Sure it's a great bin, but what about the location?

### Location Matters

Your Super Composting Red Wiggles aren't super picky about location - they live underground after all. Bins can go almost anywhere. Typically, your worms will prefer warm, dark places, but can also thrive in temperatures between 40°- 80° F - basements, garages, laundry rooms. **Watch for high temperatures - during summer, direct sunlight can be too intense.** If needed, move bins out of the direct sun and watch moisture levels.

## Harvest Poop

Black gold

### Compost Harvesting

**After 3-4 months** of feeding your Super Composting Red Wiggles, stop feeding them for about a week or so, depending on the amount of food left to consume. Once they bedding looks like dark soil, you are ready to harvest.

One way to harvest is to expose the entire bin to light and let the worms crawl to the bottom. Then remove layers of rich compost.

While harvesting compost, search for yellow cocoons - many babies are in there. Put the cocoons with the worms to start a new bin and begin the whole process again!

**It is important to change the bedding seasonally.** Your Super Composting Red Wiggles are strong, but they can die in old bedding.

## Red Wigglerism

In the event of Strong Odor, stop adding food! Move the bedding around and let them consume what is there.

