

Make your own bokashi ferment

Bokashi is the Japanese way of composting. Translated, it means: "fermented organic waste". The organic material is not composted but fermented. The waste is decomposed by effective microorganisms in the absence of air. This produces an organic fertiliser that you can apply to your plants.

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What can go in the bokashi bucket?

Any organic waste can be utilised in the Bokashi bucket. Waste such as raw or cooked vegetables, fruit scraps, bread, lawn cuttings, tea and coffee grounds, flowers, leaves and unwanted weeds from the garden can be used for this purpose. The **exception is heavily mouldy food waste and material that is difficult to decompose** such as eggshells and wood.

What you need:

- Effective microorganisms (EM): You can buy EM as a liquid mixed culture of various bacteria such as lactic acid bacteria (Lactobacillales) and yeast fungi or Bokashi ferment in solid form
- Kitchen waste
- Bokashi bucket
- Spray bottle for the EM
- optional: primary rock flour
- Tamper (this can also be a potato masher or a ladle)
- Bags filled with sand or water

Can you make Bokashi without EM?

Unfortunately, it doesn't work completely without effective microorganisms. There are some alternatives on the internet, such as lactic acid bacteria from yoghurt or yeast bacteria. However, the result will be of little use and will probably go mouldy.

Instructions: Bokashi ferment

1. Collect kitchen waste, cut into small pieces and spray with undiluted EM
2. Add a layer of kitchen waste at least 10 cm thick to the Bokashi bucket every three days
3. Spray the contents with undiluted EM so that the waste is evenly moist
4. Optionally, primary rock flour can be added
5. Compact the mass with a tamper
6. Place bags filled with sand on top of the mass to recompact it during fermentation
7. Repeat steps 1 to 6 until the bokashi bucket is full. Then seal the bucket airtight and store it in an evenly tempered room with temperatures between 25 and 30 °C.

Use in the garden

With the bokashi ferment you get a solid part and a liquid part that you can use as fertiliser. As the pH value of fresh bokashi is quite low, the solid part is mixed with soil before spreading (ratio 3:1). You can add the Bokashi juice to your irrigation water, but you should also dilute the juice here (ratio 1:20-100).

