



photos © John Adams



*John Adams
and
Maddy Harland*

Hotbin Composting

Over the years I have tried most ways of making compost but I have never found one that really suited my requirements until Maddy showed me her Hotbin. I was really impressed that it worked even in winter, how quickly it made compost (about 90 days) and that it could even cope with cooked food scraps. I just had to have one.

The Hotbin came with a thermometer for checking progress, a stirring wand to mix materials and a bag of bulking agent which helps with the composting of cooked foods. It was easy to set up (*see pictures*) and I am expecting great things of it, but at this point I will hand over to Maddy who has been using hers for a couple of years.



“I was cruel to my Hotbin, and sited it in a shady narrow path conveniently by my back door. If it could get hot there and compost all year round, it could work anywhere.

I mainly use it for composting kitchen waste (cooked and uncooked) and add torn newspaper to ensure I have enough bulk (carbon) and air in the mix. I have tried adding cardboard and found even this all but disappeared within a couple of weeks. It copes with grass cuttings too but they do need to be mixed into the other material. I have also successfully composted our quota of autumn leaves.

The bin is moulded from (EPP) expanded polypropylene which is 100% recyclable. This is a highly insulating material that holds heat well, unlike a conventional plastic bin. It has a temperature gauge in the lid so you can check how hot it is and it also comes with a thermometer that you can probe into the heap for greater accuracy.

The Hotbin certainly gets hot. Last summer it was positively thrumming (up to 60°C). There is never any smell from the bin and the process is fast. There were also no flies as their eggs cannot survive the heat in the bin.



I have a good layer of compost at the bottom of the bin waiting for the seed sowing season. It has composted so hot, that I know there will be no viable weed seeds in it. I will remove it before winter as the bin needs a good airflow to prevent it ‘stalling’ (going cold). Like a fire, it needs oxygen to work well.

I need to keep the compost hot (40°C) as we enter winter, so I’ll be paying particular attention to the mix of bulk with kitchen waste and the size of any cuttings. It is a little more trouble than a normal system but the results are so good, it’s worth it. My seed and potting compost supplies are now entirely home made.”

We both love this product so much we have added it to our Green Shopping catalogue (*see below*).

To Order Products

For more details or to purchase items reviewed here (except Po-Zu) either see the *Green Shopping Supplement* on pages 67-70 or visit the *Green Shopping* website:

www.green-shopping.co.uk

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