FREE QUICK-START CHECKLIST

# Bokashi in two weeks

Sealed, indoor fermentation that handles scraps a regular compost pile can't, including meat, dairy and cooked food. Print this and keep it by the bin.

## What you need

- [ ] An airtight bin with a spigot, or a reused food-grade bucket with a sealing lid
- [ ] Bokashi bran (microbe-inoculated)
- [ ] A flat tool to press out air, like a potato masher or small plate
- [ ] Somewhere to finish it: a garden bed, large planter, compost pile or worm bin

## Filling the bin

- [ ] Chop large scraps
- [ ] Add a 1" layer of scraps, then 1–2 Tbsp bran over it
- [ ] Press the air out and seal the lid right away
- [ ] Wipe the rim so it seals cleanly
- [ ] Drain the liquid every few days to keep odors down

## Fermenting

- [ ] When it's full, seal it and leave it closed at room temperature for about 10–14 days
- [ ] Expect a sour, pickled smell and white mold on top. Both are normal.

## Finishing

- [ ] Bury at least 8" deep and cover well to keep animals away
- [ ] It breaks down in about 2–4 weeks
- [ ] Wait at least 2 weeks, ideally 3–4, before planting in that spot (longer in cool soil)
- [ ] Or mix it into a compost pile or worm bin

## The liquid ("bokashi tea")

- [ ] Dilute heavily with water before it touches soil
- [ ] Keep it off edible leaves
- [ ] Never pour it into storm drains or waterways

## My bin log

| BIN # | STARTED | FULL & SEALED | READY (+10–14 DAYS) | BURIED / ADDED ON | PLANT AFTER (+2–4 WKS) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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# When something seems off

| WHAT YOU NOTICE | WHAT TO DO |
|---|---|
| **Rotten, foul smell** (not pickled) | Add more bran, press out more air, drain more often and reseal tightly. |
| **Green, black or blue mold** | Air or competing fungi got in. Add bran, tamp and reseal. If it keeps spreading and smells rotten, the batch has gone wrong: bury it deep or add it to an outdoor pile, then wash the bin before restarting. |
| **Too much liquid** | Drain more often and add a handful of dry material like torn paper or coffee grounds. |
| **Fruit flies** | Open the bin less. Batch scraps in the freezer between openings and keep the rim clean. |

## Goes in

Fruit and vegetable scraps, meat, fish, dairy, cooked food, rice, bread, coffee grounds, eggshells, small bones.

## Skip or limit

Large bones, lots of liquid, heavily moldy food, and anything that isn't food.

**Handle it like raw food.** Wear gloves when you empty or bury the bin, wash your hands afterward, and keep the bin and the tea away from kids and pets. If you reuse a bucket, make sure it held food before.

**Sources**

1. NC State Extension (Beaufort County), "Bokashi Composting: A Faster, Easier Way to Turn Kitchen Scraps into Garden Gold," 2025. ces.ncsu.edu
2. Washington State University Extension, Kitsap County, bokashi composting guidance. extension.wsu.edu
3. University of Saskatchewan Gardening, "Bokashi." gardening.usask.ca

Full guide: myzerowastekitchen.com/bokashi-composting-small-kitchens-guide. General guidance only. © 2026 My Zero Waste Kitchen, a Dan Duda Ventures company.