

## Managing Your Compost Toilet

By Maria Matthews of *Strumpet and Trollop*

I get a lot of phone calls from customers asking about the management of their buckets...so I thought I would just do a file of simple instructions based on what I've done.



For those of us who have been composting for years, this seems obvious, but we were all complete novices once.

In my experience, the best 'cover' materials to use are wooden cat litter pellets and small pet bedding. They are also easy to get hold of and cheap!

Start by putting a compostable bag in your bucket...you don't have to use one, you can just pour the contents straight into your secondary composting container (which is the place where the real magic will happen), but using bags just keeps it all cleaner, and means that you can lift it out when full, double bag and

then transport it to your secondary container if it isn't nearby where the loo is being used.



Then at the bottom put an inch of the wooden cat litter pellets...this acts as a biological sponge and will soak up extra moisture, and any urine that may get in there.

Then with every 'deposit', throw on a handful of the pet bedding. You can throw all the loo paper in as well, it will compost, but it will also make the bin fill up faster so we always put dirty loo paper in a separate little bin lined with a paper bag to then bin or burn afterwards. It also can stop the pet bedding covering the 'deposits' properly, not allowing it to do its job of drying out the contents and minimising any smell.



When the bucket is full, then remove it from your loo and take it outside, then take the bag out...never try to lift the bag out in situ just in case it splits! Lift out the bag and either put it straight into your secondary container and break it open with a garden fork, add more cover and mix it in with what is already in there. If you need to store it for a while because you are travelling or need to transport it, then double bag it, tie it up and put it in a spare bucket with a lid on.

Depending on your living/travelling situation there are many different containers you can use to suit the space you have available. If you have enough space, the best secondary container I have found is a wheelie bin! You can get them in different sizes. Just drill a few random 10mm holes around the sides to allow airflow. The wheels mean that you can move them around easily if needed and they are ideal for dragging and tipping when fully composted for you to empty the contents on to the ground to dig in or bag up.

If you have room for two bins then you can easily manage quite effortlessly all that you and your family produce...it took us, a family of four a year to fill one up, and then that had a year to compost down while we filled up the second one... when that was full, empty the first and start to fill it again. If the secondary container gets too wet, add some more cover and work it in. If it seems to be drying out add some wee. That will add both moisture and some more nitrogen to help it get working again.

There is such a feeling of achievement when you see your first bucket to compost completion...no water wasted...no chemicals used!  
It's just Magical!

Maria x