



**GREAT GREEN SYSTEMS**

# GREEN JOHANNA

FOOD WASTE COMPOSTER

Installation and User Manual



# CONGRATULATIONS ON BUYING YOUR GREEN JOHANNA

You are now one of the thousands of householders and businesses who have chosen the *Gardeners' World Star Buy*\* to perform all their composting needs. This handy guide features all the information you need to erect and use the Green Johanna to help you create nutrient-rich compost from food and garden waste.

## **To Get The Best From Your Green Johanna, Follow The Instructions Below:**

It's important to not only familiarise yourself with how to use your new composter properly but with the components that make up the unit. By understanding how the composter breaks down waste material, you can learn to get the very best out of the Green Johanna every day.

From assembling and installing the unit in your garden to feeding it the right waste and keeping the carbon-nitrogen balance just right, everything is included in this booklet. Please make sure you keep it safe as you may find it handy to refer back to should your composting slow down during the winter or you wish to check whether certain waste matter can be put in it.

All that's left to do now is read through the next few pages and follow the simple instructions to quality composting.



\*Awarded 2021 and 2022

# Checking over the Green Johanna and setting it up ready for the garden

With your Green Johanna now in front of you, it's worthwhile just giving it a quick check to ensure there was no damage in transit to you. You should have a base plate, four ring sections, two hatch doors, a lid and aerator stick. You will find a bag of screws taped to the underside of the lid. You just need to have a flathead and crosshead screwdriver to hand.

## Now It's Time To Assemble:

**Step 1.** Locate the four circular sections of the Green Johanna. These will be assembled in decreasing circles moving upwards. The four sections are marked A-D with A as the bottom section. When you join the sections, ensure that A lines up with A, B lines up with B etc. With the basic shape of the unit now formed, locate the screw holes that will secure the Green Johanna together. You may find it easier to insert the screws North and South first, then East and West. Put a screw in each hole and fasten gently, only going halfway in with each screw (this allows for a little manipulation as you attach the bottom and lid).

**Step 2.** With the main body assembled you need to attach the bottom plate. Lift up the Green Johanna and place on top of the base. As with step 1, align both sections so the screw holes are together. Put in the final screws halfway again.

**Step 3.** It is now time to tighten each screw. This should be done from the base plate upwards. As you tighten each level of the unit, gently push down from above to make sure every part of the unit is secure and doesn't slip as you fix together. With every screw tightened properly, the Green Johanna will now be solid and stable.

**Step 4.** You can now place the lid on top of the Green Johanna and put the whole unit in your garden. The two doors at the bottom of the Green Johanna should be screwed shut to prevent animals gaining access, and opened when you want to take out compost. If you have any further questions regarding assembly please don't hesitate to call 0800 731 2572 or email [sales@greatgreensystems.com](mailto:sales@greatgreensystems.com)

*The Green Johanna comes with a guarantee against material defects. Please keep all your paperwork safe for any future reference.*

# Getting the Green Johanna perfectly placed and ready

With the Green Johanna now assembled you need to find the perfect place for it in your garden. Choosing this spot and getting the initial feed of material right are vital to successful composting moving forward.

## Choosing The Ideal Location For The Unit

The Green Johanna is best placed on a flat patch of grass or soil. It can be sited on a hard surface if excess liquid is able to drain freely away. Please be aware that this liquid may stain stone or decking. Also pay particular attention to getting the base layer right (see below). Ideally the Johanna should also be near the house, so that it is convenient to get to in winter. If there is a known rodent problem locally, it is advisable to site the Johanna away from fence lines if you can.

## Getting The Base Layer Right

With the Green Johanna ideally located, you now need to prepare the unit with a perfect base layer to help activate the compost and keep the air in the composter flowing. This initially involves 10cm to 20cm of twigs and very coarse garden material spread evenly across the base. Top this with some fine garden waste such as grass trimmings, followed by a little soil or existing compost you may already have. The basic mix is now ready for food waste.

## Keep The Aerator Stick Handy

Aerating the material within the Green Johanna is a vital part of the composting process. With this in mind we recommend that wherever you place the composter, you keep your aerator stick nearby. This gives you easy access to the stick whenever you add new material and reminds you to agitate the mix.

# Completing the set-up process and continuing to compost

With the Green Johanna well located and the base layers prepared and ready, we can now turn our attention to making the perfect compost. Just as with the set-up materials, it is vital to keep layering the waste you put into the unit.

## How To Add Food And Garden Waste

On top of the base layer mixture you can add your first layer of food waste. From here on, waste should be added in alternating layers of food waste then garden/paper waste in roughly equal proportions. Ensure waste is chopped up, as smaller items will compost faster. Composting micro-organisms need nutrition in the form of carbon and nitrogen. Food waste and fresh green garden waste provide nitrogen, while dry, woody garden waste and paper/cardboard waste provide carbon. Best practice is to cover each addition of food waste with a layer of woody garden waste and/or shredded paper and torn-up cardboard (tape and labels removed). Woodchips are a useful addition as they create pathways for air. When adding paper and cardboard it can be helpful to create air pockets, this can be done by adding paper that is scrunched up and by leaving tubes from toilet rolls and kitchen rolls whole. Efficient composting is best achieved through a good balance of materials. Through observing your composter's contents you will come to know if the balance is not right. If the compost is too wet and is starting to smell, add carbon-rich materials and aerate well. If it is dry, add materials high in nitrogen. The consistency should be damp like a wrung-out bath sponge.

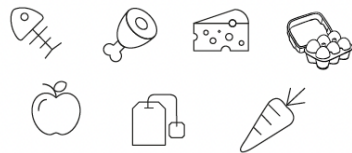
## Aerating The Mix

With every new layer of waste material, ensure that you gently stir the fresh top layer of mixture with some of the older layer beneath. This allows all the micro-organisms working below to become part of the new layer that's just been added. It is also vital that once a month you give the whole compost pile a stir, helping all the layers to blend together for a more consistent and fine compost finish.

### Here's What To Put In Your Green Johanna

#### Kitchen Waste:

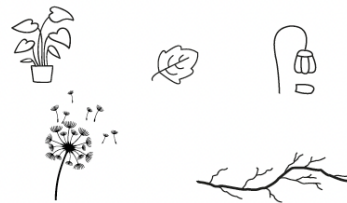
Cooked foods, including meat and fish, plus fruit and vegetable scraps and peelings, dairy, bread, eggshells (crushed), pasta, rice, tea bags, coffee grounds, coffee filters.



#### Garden Waste/Paper Waste:

Chopped branches and twigs, garden clippings, leaves, bark, wilted flowers and plants, wood chips, straw, sawdust, household paper, newspaper, egg cartons, cereal boxes, cardboard.

Fresh grass mowings are high in nitrogen so if added in large amounts they should be balanced with high-carbon inputs such as stored autumn leaves, scrunched-up paper and cardboard, wood chips.



*It is OK to place food into the Johanna in a compostable bag, but do not place regular plastic bags into the composter in any circumstances.*

## Remember the essential ingredients for continual composting

The location and the right waste management are vital for ensuring the three mainstays of good composting.

#### Air Circulation

*By continually moving the waste in the composter you allow oxygen to reach all the micro-organisms helping to break down the matter. Without air, compost will start to smell bad and the process will slow down or even stop. Occasional deeper aeration using a garden fork will aid the process.*

#### Heat

*As the contents are broken down, heat is created by micro-organisms. As the temperature in the compost fluctuates, the types of micro-organisms present also changes. This diversity is important for successful composting.*

#### Water

*Moisture is an essential part of the composting process so ensure that you have a mixture of wet and dry materials so that the Johanna's contents have the continuous consistency of a wrung-out damp bath sponge.*

## Accelerating The Composting Process

You can choose to accelerate the composting process by liberally and evenly sprinkling our Bokashi Bran into the Johanna on a regular basis. In winter you can add a bucketful or two of mature compost to boost the process. Depending on the conditions, the compost should be ready to use after four to six months.

# The most common questions asked by Green Johanna users

## **Q. My Compost Smells Of Ammonia, Is That Right?**

- A. No, your compost should hardly have an aroma. You have probably been putting in too much nitrogen-rich waste like grass clippings, meat or fish. To counter the smell and regain the normal harmony of the compost, add in some garden soil and a mixture of chopped-up woody garden waste, shredded paper, torn-up cardboard and/or woodchips. Mix this in and then take a small batch of the finished compost from the base of the unit and sprinkle over the top.

## **Q. The Compost In The Green Johanna Smells Bad. How Do I Get Rid Of The Odour?**

- A. First of all it's important to understand the cause of the smell, which in this case is due to poor aeration. You will need to add some chopped hedge clippings and other coarse garden waste. This must now be well mixed in and air forced around all the interior of the unit. If at this stage the compost is looking too wet, add some shredded paper, torn-up cardboard and/or woodchips and mix in well.

## **Q. How Do I Stop Ants From Getting In The Compost?**

- A. You need to keep your compost moist, the ants are attracted to dry soil-like materials. Now is the time to take a small watering can and gently start to add water to your mix. After every few sprinkles mix in the water. You want the consistency to feel like damp sponge.

## **Q. There Are Lots Of Flies In And Around My Compost, Is This Normal?**

- A. No, this is an indication of poorly covered, nitrogen-rich compost. There are a couple of things you need to look at here. Firstly, mix the surface layer well and cover with fresh soil and clippings. Secondly, check that you are shutting the lid securely when you are filling up the Green Johanna.

## **Q. What Insects Do I Want Living In My Compost?**

- A. The more insects and creatures munching away in your Green Johanna the warmer it will get and the composting process will continue at pace. So when you mix your layers look out for: mites, worms, false-scorpions, woodlice, springtails, nematodes, centipedes and earwigs.

## **Q. It Looks Like The Activity In My Composter Has Stopped, What Have I Done Wrong?**

- A. There are six main reasons for a composter to stop working. Read through the options below to identify your cause:
- #1. There may be too much carbon content (ie dry leaves, twigs, paper) so add food waste and green garden waste and mix in well.
  - #2. You have too much bulky material in the mix. It is important to chop all waste finely and mix well.
  - #3. A lack of material in general will always slow the process and in some cases stop it completely. Fresh and regular waste filled near to the top of the unit is the way to start up the process again.
  - #4. The whole mix is too solid and compact, strangling air supply throughout. Give the contents a really good stir and add chopped-up twigs, shredded or scrunched-up paper, torn-up cardboard, woodchips to help with aeration.
  - #5. The compost has dried out, stalling the process. You need to be adding more moist food waste and water carefully to bring back the damp sponge consistency.
  - #6. Cold weather and a poorly-fed Green Johanna can bring a halt to the composting process. During the colder months make sure you are topping up the layers every day and consider putting an insulating jacket on the composter. Insulating Jackets are available at [www.greatgreensystems.com](http://www.greatgreensystems.com)



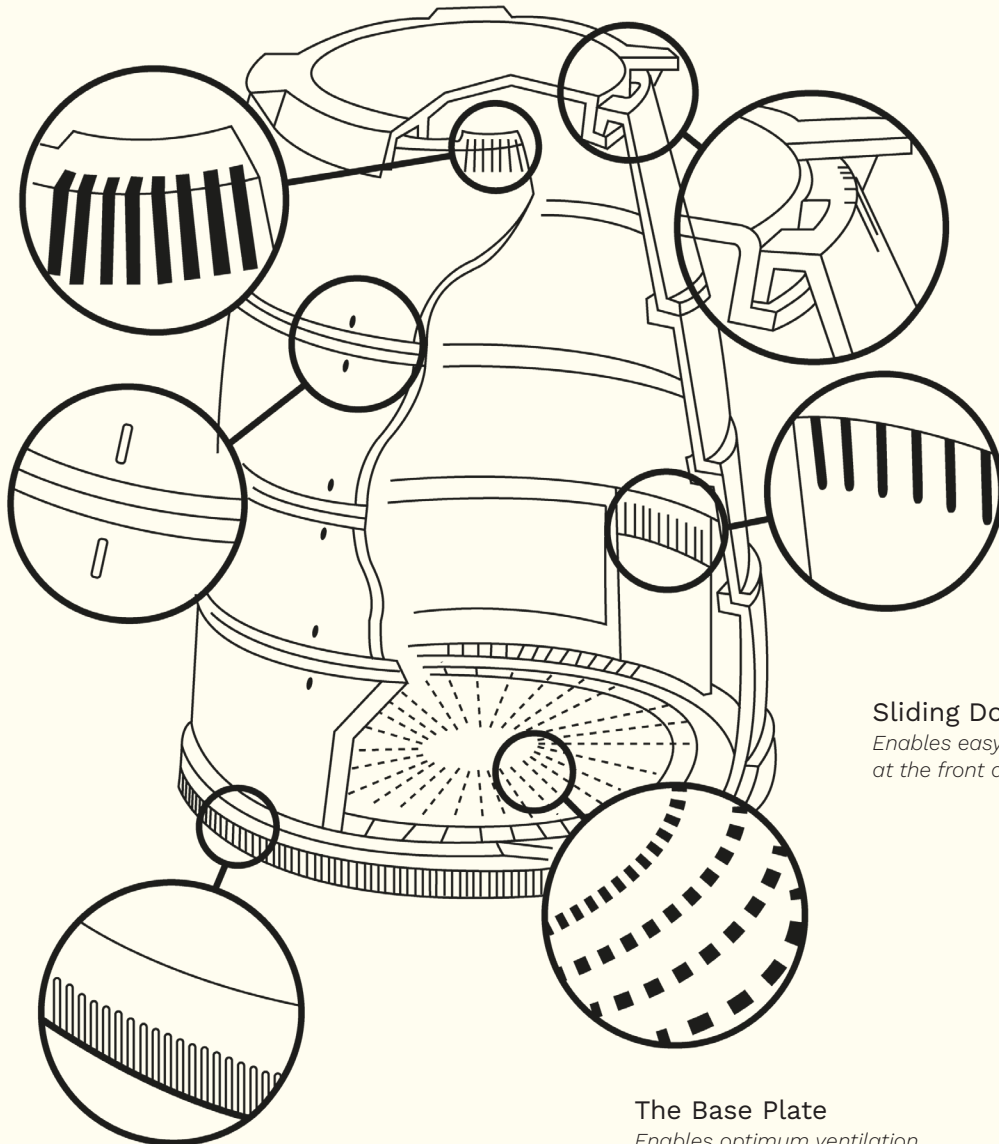
# The Green Johanna

## The Lid

*The container's ventilation system is controlled by simply turning the lid. The minimum setting covers the ventilation holes (and so maintains a warm internal temperature in cold weather) while the maximum setting uncovers the ventilation holes.*

## The Cone-Shaped Design

*Ensures compost sinks towards the centre of the unit and not to its sides for optimum air circulation and oxygenation.*



## Sliding Doors

*Enables easy removal of compost at the front and rear.*

## The Base Plate

*Enables optimum ventilation and space for worms to enter. The plate's holes are kept to a diameter of 4.5mm, deterring vermin from accessing the unit. The base plate's four inward-facing air vents ensure adequate air circulation.*

## Assembling

*When assembling the Green Johanna the arrows on each section of the bin must be kept in line.*