Scotty's Hot Box

Any problems—questions contact:

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Your Hot Box will arrive flat packed, firstly take it to where it is to be installed and make sure you have adequate space and reasonably flat, level ground.

Tools needed – Phillips screwdriver – spanner – also useful to have a rubber or wooden mallet.
The threaded bar will arrive with
preset spacer nuts - do not attempt to move them.

Place the floor section on the ground where the bin is to be installed – this can be straight on the ground or on concrete etc – although you will need to be aware of any liquids which might be released – see last page.

Remove the top planks on the side panels – or just bend to the side –

Place one of the side panels – (left or right) in place - note the drilled hole at the top which will take the threaded bar.

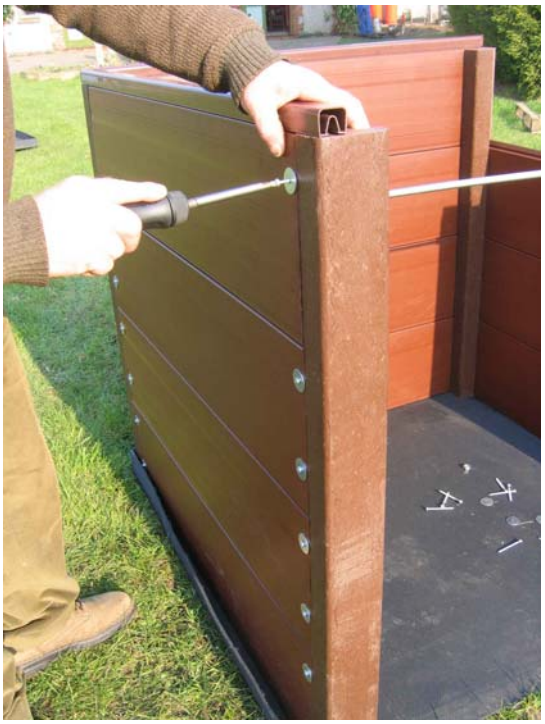
If you have two people it is easiest if one holds the other side panel in place whilst the threaded bar is inserted through both – see pictures.
Put the nuts on and tighten up.

The back panel planks can now be screwed in – remember the washers, to the pre-drilled holes.

The rubber mallet is used to snap the tongue and grooved planks together as you attach them.

The top plank on the side panels can also be attached now

Finish screwing all the planks on



Screwing the base section on

It's easier if you roll the whole box over.

All that remains to be done now is to put the lid on.
See also setting up picture overleaf

Setting up the box
Fresh fruit and vegetable waste releases a lot of liquid as it breaks down and it's useful if you can collect this material.

It's easy to place a short length of guttering to divert any liquids into a bucket

This box is designed to be able to take all kinds of food waste from food preparation wastes, vegetable peelings, tops and tails, fruit skins etc to plate scrapings. Cooked food waste is hopefully only present in quite small amounts and as long as it is mixed well with fresh materials and the appropriate, especially 'structural' carbon to balance it (see below) - it will compost. The ideal time to start composting is the beginning of the growing season when plenty of fresh matter can be added – but if you already have lots of fresh vegetable trimmings and or fruit peels etc then this is not such an issue.

What you will need however is a good source of 'structural carbon'. This means shredded or chipped woody matter – woodchips, barkchips, shredded green waste, even sawdust although if it is too fine it will not add that much structure. Small twigs, hedge prunings etc are all useful to provide the structure which allows an airflow through the heap. You can make a simple container for these materials of just store them in sacks to use when needed.

A rough starting point recipe is to mix the carbon rich (Browns) with the nitrogen rich (Greens) in about equal volumes. The ideal is to tumble them together in a cement mixer – but failing that put them in the bin as thin layers. You can also add cardboard and paper but beware of thinking this is a structural material and don't add more than about a quarter of your 'Brown' mix (so three quarters of a bucket of woodchip and a quarter of a bucket of cardboard/paper – mixed with a bucket of fruit and veg etc – roughly – there are so many variables at work here that you cannot be absolute about anything, the real secret is to be aware of the different materials and their properties and to adapt the mix as necessary. Depending on the water content of your 'Greens' you might also need to add some water too.
When your bin is full take the top layers off and put to one side. You should get down to some nice finished compost at the bottom—depending on how long it has been, this is dependent on volumes of materials you are putting in. This material can be left in a pile until needed –cover with a bit of old carpet or plastic sheet, or bag it up, or use it straightaway as a mulch.