Step-by-Step Instructions for Starting a Worm Composting Bin:

1.) **Soak the coir brick that comes with the bin in a large bowl or bucket with a gallon of water.** It will swell as it soaks up water. After a few minutes, break up any chunks to speed up the process.

2.) **Tear corrugated cardboard up into palm-sized pieces.** *(This is easier if you throw a box in the shower for 20 seconds, then flip it and wet the other side. Let it sit for 5-10 minutes, then tear it up).* Tear up enough to fill half the tray, then soak with toilet paper tubes and paper towel tubes in a bucket of water for 5 minutes.

3.) **Dip 2 full sheets of newspaper in water to moisten,** and fold them to fit over the bottom of the bin while the cardboard and coir are soaking. This will keep castings from dropping through the bottom at the start.

4.) **Chop kitchen scraps up into small pieces.** *(Chopping isn’t absolutely necessary, but it speeds up composting and is highly recommended for your first tray.)* In a large bowl or bucket, mix the scraps with an equal amount of dry shredded bank statements or newspaper.

5.) **Lift the cardboard out of the water and place it in the bin.** Mix the food/shredded paper mixture into the cardboard. If you’re using coir, add it at this time as well.

6.) **Spread a handful of good garden soil, and/or fresh worm castings from an active worm bin, over the surface.** If you live near old trees, dig up a couple handfuls of leaf mould or duff from under the trees, and spread it over the surface as well.

7.) **Mix everything together with your hands.** Your worm bin is now ready for your worms.

8.) **Dip 2 full sheets of newspaper in the cardboard soaking water to wet the paper, then spread it out on top of the bedding.** Fold the edges so the damp paper forms a cap over the entire surface. The newspaper holds in moisture, makes it more difficult for fungus gnats and fruit flies to lay eggs in the castings, and provides a cool, dark shelter for your worms.

9.) **As soon as your worms arrive, remove the damp newspaper from the top of the bin.** Open the box and carefully shake the worms out over the surface of the bin. They may be balled up into a big mass that plops out into the bin, but that’s okay, they’ll spread out and make their way down into the bedding on their own.

10.) **Replace the damp newspaper “cap” for the bin.** Don’t feed them again until the bin ecosystem kicks in and castings start accumulating under the newspaper.