

# Keep your Garden Healthy over Extended Absence (up to 2 weeks)

Your Little Green Thumbs garden has been designed to survive for 2 weeks without interaction and with the proper preparation. Try these simple tips to make sure your classroom garden stays healthy and vibrant over a two - week period of absence.



## 1. Fill your water reservoirs

The simplest tip: remember to fill your water reservoirs that are below your growing boxes right before you leave.

## 2. Transplant any seedlings into larger containers

Planting seedlings will help prevent them from drying out. Remember to water them well once you plant them in the larger containers. Smaller seedlings will not survive a 2-week absence.

## 3. Place damp newspapers over the top of soil

Place a few layers of damp newspaper on soil as mulch, to prevent evaporation.

## 4. Trim foliage of mature plants the day before leaving

Trim foliage of mature plants the day before leaving so they will require less water during your absence.

## 5. Build a mini greenhouse over your potted plants

Cover your pots with a transparent plastic bag, lifted with bamboo poles. Poke a couple holes in the bag for oxygen.

## 6. Use sticky traps to check for pests the week before

Place a few sticky traps in the garden & monitor for a few days to ensure there are no signs of pests. If you do see pests, begin treating with our soap spray recipe. Remove affected leaves, and if needed, remove the entire plant in case of serious infestation.

## 7. Set timer to 8 hours of light

Double check that your timer is set for 8 hours of light each day. This will be a far decreased amount of light time than you have used in the past and is used to conserve water in your garden and limit growth. Once you return to your garden, set your timer back to 10-14 hours of light.

## Caring for your Vermicompost bin in extended absence (up to 1-month)



**The most important considerations for your vermicomposting worms will be to ensure that they have been fed before you go and that the worm bin moisture level is not too dry or too wet.** It is highly recommended to take your vermicomposting bin home if you can during the closure period, or you might offer it to a student to take care of during this closure.

Your worm bin should have the moisture consistency of a wrung-out sponge. If it is too dry, add some water. If it is too wet, add some extra newspaper bedding.

You will want to feed your worms the amount of food they will need for the period that you will be away. Worms generally eat about half their body weight a day in food scraps. That means if you have a pound of worms, they can eat a half pound of food scraps.

Generally, a Little Green Thumbs worm bin can use to 1 litre (a yoghurt container) of food scraps each week. You will probably have a good idea of what your worms can eat in that period if you have been taking care of your bin for a while. Simply extrapolate that amount to the period that you will be away.

If in doubt, we suggest adding 3 yoghurt containers (3 litres) of food scraps for a month that you will be absent. This will allow enough food for your worms, without being too much food to overwhelm the bin. Be sure to avoid adding any bread that could lead to molding and always ensure that the food is completely covered by the newspaper bedding.