



# Container Gardening



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## Why Garden in Containers?

- Awful soil
- More options for plant placement
- Limited time
- Limited mobility
- Limited funds
- Limited space
- Apartment or condo rules don't allow in-ground gardening




## Container Gardening

- Container types
- Container soils
- Watering
- Fertilizing
- Plants
- Designing with containers




Photo: Hobro Solutions

## Containers


- Container drainage is crucial for plant survival!
- Match pot size to plant type and growth rate
- Small containers may dry out too quickly
- Mouth of the container should not be too narrow



Secretssavored.com

## Containers

- Clay
- Porous, can wick moisture out of the media and dry out the rootball
- Soak in water before planting
- Can get mold or calcium buildup
- May freeze and crack in winter; store indoors
- Heavy
- Expensive

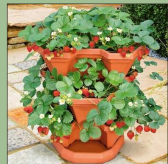


## Containers

- Plastic, resin, fiberglass
- Hold water longer than clay (not porous)
- Black plastic gets very hot—can cook your roots
- Lighter in weight
- May be less expensive
- Colors may fade in sun, but many available
- Textures often available
- Plastic pot recycling



Homestratosphere.com



## Containers

- Stone/Cement
- Durable!
- Heavy
- Expensive, but hard to run off with!
- Faux stone may be an option or painting clay or plastic pots with spray-paint stone finishes



## Containers

- Glazed Ceramic
- Very popular
- Many colors, textures and sizes
- Expensive
- Don't leave outside over winter—may crack
- Heavy



Oldtimepottery.com

## Containers

- Wood
- Half-barrels
- Teak, cedar, redwood
- Paintable and sealable
- Need more maintenance



## Windowboxes

- Windowboxes
- Plastic or metal
- Avoid if too narrow or shallow
- Check often for water
- May seasonally change some of the plantings



## Windowboxes



Metal frames with fiber, sphagnum moss or coco-mat liners

## Hanging baskets

- Hanging baskets, balls, wall planters
- Plastic or metal
- Dry out very fast
- Vertical gardening is great for small spaces
- Metal: use sphagnum moss or coco-mat liners
- Make sure your hook will support the weight of your basket



## Containers



## Hanging balls



Ferndale-lodge.co.uk

## Non-traditional Containers

All you need are some drainage holes

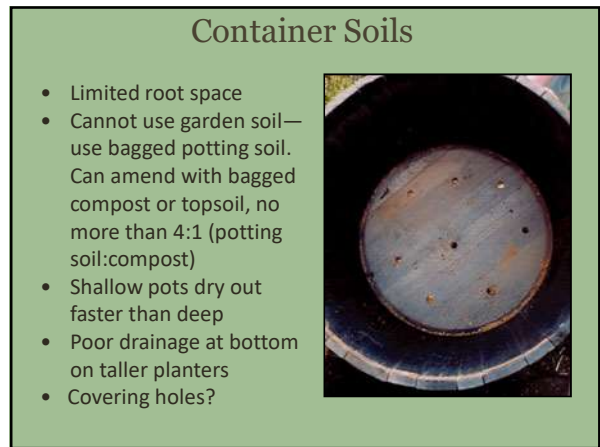
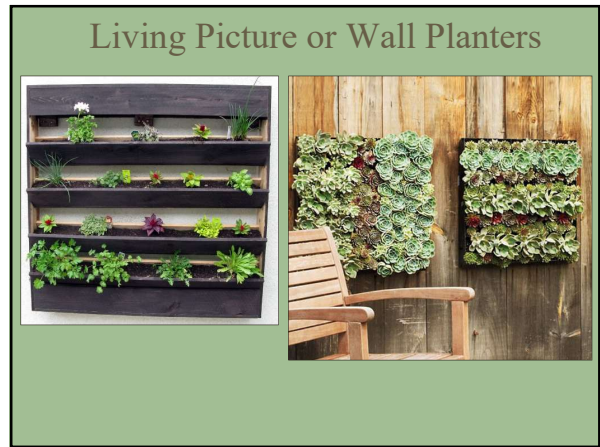


## Non-traditional Containers



Haweliavalenovapark.info

Pinterest  
Head Planters



## Container Soils

Soil-less mixes have:

- A mineral component such as vermiculite or perlite
- An organic component such as peat, fir bark or pine bark
- May have slow-release fertilizer, if not are low in nutrients
- Very porous, hold water well, good for root growth
- If using compost, (not soil-less) be sure to mix it with perlite, rice hulls or fine-ground bark etc. so it is not too heavy



## Planting in Containers

- Pre-moisten the media if needed
- Pre-moisten plants if needed
- Cover drainage holes or add gravel if desired
- Add old water bottles, soup cans or butter tubs if needed to reduce depth of soil and container weight
- Do not re-use old soil if plants were diseased
- Spread roots if root-bound



## Fertilizing

- Starter fertilizers
  - Higher in phosphorus
  - Promotes rooting
- Water soluble fertilizers
- Slow release fertilizers
- Organic fertilizers
- Follow the label
- Water thoroughly so the water comes through the drainage holes



thegreenninja.com

## Fertilizing

- If using water soluble, apply every two weeks – due to leaching, slow release, once only
- If very hot, don't apply that week
- Apply less during July 'slump'
- May want to use a 'bloom builder' for some plants
- If plants are very dry, don't fertilize, water
- If using organic, may use more often – will depend on concentration of product



## Watering Guidelines

- How often??
- Check on a daily basis starting at the end of May or the beginning of warm weather
- Factors affecting water usage include media, temperature, wind, sun, container size & type and plant type



## Watering Guidelines

- Moisten entire root zone so water drips out the bottom, then allow to dry out a little
- Avoid doing light waterings



## Annuals

Many choices - some ornamental annuals that do well:

- Coleus
- Impatiens
- Petunias
- Snapdragons
- Salvia
- Sw. Potato Vines
- Geraniums
- Begonias
- Celosia
- Marigolds
- Ornamental Kale



## Vegetables

- Allow enough space for root development!
- Choose compact, bush, patio or dwarf varieties
- If trellising, make sure the trellis can support the plant and the pot is heavy enough for both
- Recommended species vegetables for containers include lettuce, spinach, radishes, bush-type peas, peppers, chard, patio or cherry tomatoes, bush cucumbers



## Vegetables

- For peppers, chard, and dwarf tomatoes use pots holding 2-5 gallons soil
- For larger tomatoes, cucumbers or egg plant use pots holding at least 10 gallons of soil
- For lettuce and radishes, pots must be at least 6-8" deep



## Herbs

- Annual herbs are the easiest as they do not have to be overwintered
- If growing herbs indoors, the more light, the better 4-6+ hours
- If indoors, watch for spider mites, aphids and whiteflies.



## Herbs

- Variegated sage, purple sage, or golden sage
- Greek Oregano
- Cuban Oregano
- Rosemary
- Marjoram
- Basil
- Thyme
- Chives
- Summer savory



greenfingers.com

## Perennials

Some perennials that can work in pots include bulbs, asters, ferns, sedum, astilbe, heuchera, some campanula, hens-and-chicks, phlox, some ornamental grasses and hostas.



oregonlive.com



msuecares.com



Forest & Kim Starr WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

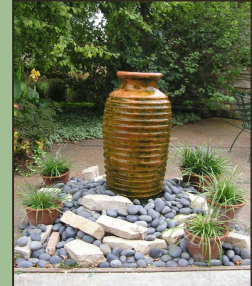
## Success With Containers

- If using mixed plantings, combine plants with similar cultural needs
- Be aware of water, light and fertility requirements



## Success With Containers

- Full sun = 6+ hours/day
- Partial sun = 3-5 hours/day
- Partial shade = dappled sun for a few hours
- Shade = no direct light



## Trends in Container Design

- Groupings
- Tropicals
- Vegetables and ornamental edibles
- One plant species vs many/pot
- Repeating similar colors in different textures



## Designing with Containers

- Mixed forms: Thriller, chiller, spiller—can have more than one of each
- Texture
  - Contrast
  - Color palette
  - Color Repetition



## Designing with Containers

- Horizontal planters:
- Avoid planting in straight rows
- Vary heights of main plants
- Soften with filler plants



## Thank You!

For more information contact  
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