

Container Planting

What do we need to start?

- Containers for planting – flower pots or waterproof boxes, etc, with drainage holes
- Suitable ‘bedding’ plants – you can grow these yourself
- (Perennial plants and small trees can be used and saved for next year)
- Compost/soil – a mixture of garden soil and compost will do fine
- Small stones to assist drainage
- Long-acting plant food
- Labels Pen/pencil
- Pallet 1 x metre square (optional)

Even if you don’t have a garden there is always a place where a pot or some sort of container, such as a window box, trough or tub can be filled with plants to add colour to an otherwise dull area. But be careful! Containers dry out quickly and need regular watering especially during hot, dry periods.

Plant containers can come in many sizes, shapes and colours and can be made from a variety of materials - clay, stone, wood, metal or plastic. They need not be expensive, and you can make your own ‘planters’ from a 2- litre plastic milk container, a large biscuit tin, wooden box or any other water- resistant container that can hold a depth of at least 15cm of soil. The bottom of the container must have drainage holes to prevent waterlogging and enough compost/soils to support the growing plants.

When choosing plants for your container, you should choose carefully:

- Will the plants grow well together,
- Do they prefer sun or shade,
- How much room do they need
- When will they flower?

This is information that will help to make a better display. Generally, a selection of bedding plants from the garden centre will provide a lasting bright display.

Also, groups of pots and other containers of different shapes and sizes can be arranged together onto a wooden pallet (Approx. 1 metre square) for a wonderful show of colour. The procedure is similar to ‘flower arranging’ as you can move the pots and containers around to get the best effect. When the season is over any unwanted plants that have passed their best can be put onto the compost heap and any perennial plants that need frost protection can be moved inside and used again next year. A pallet display is a simple and easy way of producing your own small colourful garden that can also produce herbs, salad crops and fruit such as strawberries.



Instructions:

Planting up Pots and Containers

1. Select a suitable size and shape of container for the plants it is to hold.
2. Ensure the container has drainage holes and place some small stones in the bottom to assist drainage.
3. Mix a small amount of long acting fertilizer (follow maker's recommendations) with soil/compost – this will supply plant food throughout the growing season.
4. Fill and firm compost to within 2cm of the container's rim. Using a trowel or your hands, make a hole big enough to take your plant and firm into position by pressing around the plant with your fingers.
5. Water the plants and let them drain before putting into position.
6. The container will require regular attention:
 - watering,
 - dead-heading (removing all of the dead flowers)
 - removing any dead or diseased plants will help to keep the display fresh.
 - During the season occasionally weed and loosen the soil around the growing plants.
 - It is important to treat any pests as soon as they appear.
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7. If you have planted-up a metre square pallet, rearrange the plants, replace them and change the design to keep your display fresh, colourful and interesting.

