

Create Your Own Terrarium



Terrariums are small gardens under glass. Gardeners have long been using glass containers to grow their favorite ferns, carnivorous plants like Venus fly trap, woodland favorites, moss and more. You can create your own garden under "plastic" by recycling some of those 2-liter soda bottles headed for the recycling bin.

melindamyers.com

Here's what you will need:

- 2-liter plastic soda bottle (dent-free) or other clear container
- Gardener's Charcoal to keep soil smelling fresh (optional)
- Well-drained potting mix
- Small slow growing plants like baby's tears, artillery plant, ferns, moss and miniature African violet.

Converting Your Soda Bottle into a Terrarium

Step 1:

Remove the label from your container. Using a blow dryer set on low held about 4 inches away from the bottle will melt the glue, making it easy to peel off the label.

Step 2:

Cut (with scissors or utility knife) the bottle to create a base (planting area) the desired height. The top of the bottle (capped end) will be your cover. Make several vertical slices through the cut end of the bottle's top. These cuts allow you to squeeze the top into the terrariums base to hold it in place.

Planting Your Newly Constructed Terrarium

Step 3: (optional)

Place some gardener's (activated) charcoal in the bottom of the terrarium to keep the soil smelling good. Add a layer of decorative gravel or sand for added color.

Step 4:

Fill the bottom of the base with several inches of a well-drained potting mix.

Step 5:

Plant small plants (one or two may be all that will fit) in the soil so the roots are fully covered. Water gently and just enough to moisten the soil. (Don't over water or your plants will rot.)

Step 6:

Decorate with small stones, shells, figurines and more.

Step 7:

Cover your terrarium with the bottle top. Squeeze the cut end of the bottle top and slide inside the sides of the terrarium's base.

Caring for Your Terrarium

All plants need water, light and nutrients to grow. Your container is somewhat self-contained and will need minimal care from you. Just follow these simple instructions:

Light: Bright light out of direct sun - you don't want to cook your plants.

Water: Seldom needs water. This is a self-contained growing unit. The soil should be moist like a damp sponge. Distilled or rainwater are the



best. Water that forms on the walls of your terrarium will drip onto the soil for the plants to use.

Food: Fertilizer is included in the soil. Add just a very dilute solution of fertilizer if your plants look hungry. Most likely the plants will outgrow the container before you need to fertilize.

Air: Remove the bottle cap if your terrarium appears too wet. Lots of water drops on the walls of the terrarium means it is time to give your plants a brief breath of fresh air.

Send us pictures (<http://melindamyers.com/What-s-Blooming.html>) of your terrariums so we can share with others.

For more ideas for reusing your 2-liter soda bottles visit <http://www.bottlebiology.org/>



melindamyers.com