

build your own terrarium



Choose your Container

You will need a glass container that is deep enough for your plants' roots.

It can be open or closed depending on the plants you wish to use.

Common terrarium containers are: cloches, lanterns, apothecary jars, wardian cases, aquariums, vases or tureens.



Where to Place the Terrarium

Most terrarium plants prefer indirect lighting. Choose the best plant for the amount of light available.

Terrariums should be kept inside, in a warm room away from warm or cold drafts.

Supplies

1. Potting soil. Choose light soil with lots of drainage and preferably sphagnum/peat moss included. GARDENWORKS™ recommends Pro-Mix Premium Potting Soil or Cactus Mix.
2. Pebbles or gravel. Both provide drainage when placed at the bottom of the terrarium, and a neat appearance at the top of a terrarium. Choose stones of ¼ of an inch or smaller for drainage, but choose whatever you like for top dressing. Check out our large selection of decorative stones, coloured glass chips and sand.
3. Activated charcoal. This filters water, keeping the terrarium fresh and preventing rot.
4. Decoration. Moss, pebbles, bark, seashells... the only limit is your imagination!



Selecting Plants

Typically, foliage plants and plants that grow slowly work best. While it is possible to grow almost anything in a terrarium, it is important to choose plants that will thrive in the type of terrarium you are creating. If you are making a **closed** terrarium, choose plants that like to be moist. Also make sure to choose plants for the light they will be exposed to.

Here is a list of commonly used terrarium plants divided first by light levels. **The (O) for Open or (C) for Closed beside each plant names** tells your which environment they prefer.

Bright Light:

African Violet (O)
Tillandsia (O)
Button Fern (C)
Maiden Hair Fern (C)
Peperomia (O)
Pothos (O)
All Succulents* and Cacti (O)



Medium Light:

Arrowhead Vine (O)
Asparagus Fern (C)
Birds Nest Fern (C)
Black Mondo Grass (O)
Emerald Peperomia (O)
Orchids (O)

Low Light:

Spider Plant (C)
Rosary Vine (O)
Strawberry Begonia (O)
Watermelon Peperomia (O)
Zebra Plant (O)



Ready, Set, Create!

1. Clean your container using an antibacterial soap. Rinse thoroughly to remove all soapy residue.
2. Add rocks for drainage. Mix the gravel/pebbles with a generous handful of charcoal. Put a layer about an inch high of this mixture inside the terrarium.
3. Put in the soil. Depending on the size of the terrarium and the length of the plants roots, you should be adding about 2-3 inches of soil. Gently pack it down to remove air pockets and level the surface. Dig small holes where you will put the plants.
4. Add the plants. Remove a plant from its container and tease the roots gently apart to remove excess soil. Nestle it carefully into a hole you made previously and add more soil around it, patting it down gently. Repeat with the rest of the plants.
5. Add the props. Start with your ground covers like stones or sand. Add figurines or ornaments!
6. Give your plants a bit of moisture. Lightly water your terrarium and you're done.

Pro tips for planting in small spaces.

A small paint brush can be used to brush soil off plants. Or purchase a terrarium tool kit for that professional edge.



Maintenance

1. Water your plants. If your terrarium is open water the plants occasionally. This won't be necessary for airtight terrariums, but plants in an open terrarium will need to be watered once a week. Succulents and cacti need to be watered once a month. Air plants should be misted once a week.
2. Keep your plants healthy. If you see weeds, mold or sick plants, remove the affected area immediately. Also, remove wilting parts of the plant, such as old flowers.
3. Let some fresh air in. If your terrarium is airtight, it may occasionally be necessary to air it out if your plants are wilting or there is condensation on the sides of the terrarium. Simply prop the container slightly open by putting a rock underneath the edge of the lid.
4. If you choose to grow ferns, trim leaves to prevent them from over growing.
5. Make sure you remove yellow and brown leaves from any plants in your terrarium. This is typically a sign of disease or pest.
6. If you have an open terrarium, monitor for pests such as fungus, gnats, or mealy bugs.

Our Garden Supplies department has everything you need to keep plants healthy!