



Tips for Starting an Edible Container Garden

by Anna Barto, May 2, 2011

“Container gardening” means growing plants in pots instead of the ground. It’s a great way to save space, money and the environment. Best of all, you can start small. Here are some tips for getting started:

- Find a good spot for your plants. Small spaces like balconies, fire escapes, window sills or roofs work great. Check with your landlord first if you’re a renter.
- Pick a spot with lots of sunlight. Place containers near walls to protect plants from strong wind and rain.
- You can turn almost anything into a planter. Try using bathtubs, coffee cans, wine barrels, buckets, kiddie pools, dresser drawers, or even shoes. Just make sure water has a way to drain out of the bottom.
- Get good dirt from a local garden center. You can also make your own soil from ingredients like peat moss and compost.
- Use wide, shallow containers for crops like lettuce, onions, and greens. Save deeper ones for tomatoes, peppers, carrots, and other root vegetables.

- Choose crops that grow fast and don’t take up much space. Radishes, leafy greens, and scallions are all good picks.
- Start growing your seeds indoors when it’s cold outside. You can buy starter kits, or make your own out of egg cartons or empty yogurt containers. Once the weather gets warmer, you can move your plants outdoors.
- Take care of your plants! Shade them from the heat, and cover them if it gets cold. Try to protect your plants from bugs and other animals. When you travel, find someone to take care of your garden.



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