

RECYCLE – REPURPOSE – REUSE

Here are a few things that will help you to save money, time and the environment.

Plastic Jugs, Bottles and Containers:

- Plant Protectors (cloche) – Cut out the bottom of gallon or liter water or juice jugs and place over young seedlings or plants to protect from the cold. Remember to take off during the day or plants will cook.
- Terrarium - To keep high humidity for young plants. Remove cap for air flow.
- Funnel/Scoop - Excellent when measuring for soil, amendments, chemicals or fertilizers. Just cut out the bottom to the needed measurement. Or mark accordingly.
- Drip Irrigation - When going away you can fill a gallon container and wick water to your pots. Just place a cotton strip or piece of cloth from the jug to the plant and it will water itself while your gone. You can also drill a small hole in the cap and invert the bottle which has the bottom cut out and fill with water. Sink into the ground next to plants that need extra watering throughout your garden.
- Seed Starters - Use any food container to start your seeds. You can put holes in the bottom for drainage and use the lids for saucers. Or use the lids to help to germinate seeds. Egg cartons are great and clear covered food packages (eg. roasted chicken, muffin/cake containers, take out) for small terrariums. Make sure you keep in shade and have ventilation holes.
- Feeders – For a gallon jug instant feeder, make cutouts on the sides and cross doweling through the bottles for perches. Keep the caps on to help keep seed dry. There are also screw on attachments, at your local nursery or on line that go onto soda bottles to make bird and hummingbird feeders. Keep a look out for them.

Carpet:

- When using carpet make sure you do not use the rubber backed. Use only the open weave backing. Also lay it down as you would in your home with fiber up.
- Pathways – By lying carpet on pathways as a base for stone or mulch, you will have an excellent weed barrier. Stone will not sink and water can go through for surrounding plants.
- Weed Control. - In flowerbeds, carpet can be laid as a barrier, just cut a big X where you want to plant. Turn in the corners and plant your plant and top with mulch. Water and fertilizer will drain through the carpet but the weeds will not come through. No light...No weed germination. Weeds that start on top will have shallow roots because they will have a hard time going down through the carpet. It's a win win.
- Lawn Killer - If you have an area of lawn that you want to have a flowerbed, place a piece of carpet down. In a few weeks, it will kill the grass and weeds for easy removal.

- **** Just a note on the carpet. Unless you use carpet that has been soiled by pet it will not stink. If you have a low constantly wet area the carpet may mildew but in regular irrigated areas this will not happen. Carpet will last for years. BONUS: with carpet you can cut the cost of mulch and stone, because you only have to cover the carpet. No need to go 4 inches deep.

Pill/Spice Bottles:

- Once your collected seeds are dry, place in an old empty pill/spice bottle to save them till the next season. Don't forget to mark them.
- Spice Bottles are excellent for sowing seeds. Just mix fine sand in with your seeds for even distribution. Just shake them out.

Styrofoam Packaging/Peanuts:

- Pot Drainage - Peanuts or broken up Styrofoam packaging is excellent when put in the bottom of pots for drainage. They are lightweight (verses stone) and do not break down.
- If you have a place in your garden that has muck, clay or poor drainage. Dig down to the worst of the offending area, removing the bad soil and replace with a layer of Styrofoam before adding good soil.

Fabric Softener Sheets/ Coffee Filters:

- Pot Hole Covers - You can put a shard from a broken pot over the hole but soil will still find it's way out. But try used fabric sheets or coffee filters and the water will come out but not the soil.
- Insect Repellent - After one use there is still enough of a fragrance to used softener sheets. Rub the sheets over your neck, arms etc. and it will keep flying bugs away. Tuck one in your hat, back of shirt or pants.

Old Cd's:

- Bird Reflectors - Just string these up on your fruit trees or veggie garden and the shiny side of the CD will scare off th birds from your crops.

Newspapers and Their Bags:

- Weed Barrier – A layer of 3 – 4 sheets of newspaper acts as an excellent weed barrier. It will slowly breakdown into the soil. If you have a shredder you can add the paper to your compost bin, it works great.
- Plant Hanger/Starters - Double or triple up the newspaper bags and fill with soil. Knot the open end and lay flat. Cut X's to open up to plant small plants or herbs. Let it lay flat for a week or so until the root system has grab, then you can hang it up and it will fill out beautifully for the season. Don't forget to put a few small drainage holes. You can also use this same system and just keep them flat for seeds or small transplants.

GARDEN ART

From Things You Already Have

- **CANS** - You can plant in Coffee, soup, veggie or olive oil cans. Just punch holes for drainage and make an interesting planter.
- **OLD DISHES OR KITCHEN UTENSILS/TOOLS** - These can add color and interest. For a small investment you can use a ceramic bit to drill drainage holes in bowls, cups or pots (teapots are seriously cute). Think of a trailing cactus in an old colander or sieve. Edge a special flowerbed by vertically digging in plates or saucers. Use old cutlery to mark dormant ginger or bulbs. Don't forget that gardens need sound too, so rethink your finds for a unique wind chime.
- **Baskets** - Baskets that have seen their day can be used in the garden for a fun look for a season or so. Line the basket with plastic, poke a few drainage holes and plant your favorite annual. Baskets are excellent for bromeliad too, just hang them from trees or bushes for a fun change. Spray paint them to add an extra splash of color in your garden.
- **Branches/Trunks/Roots** -Next time you chop a tree down or dig up a big root, take another look at it. Nature can produce interesting sculptures. Tuck bromeliads, orchids or mosses around them and you have wonderful garden art. You can even use branches to stake plants and it will look more natural and are easy to use. Cut slices of a trunk for stepping path, hollow out stumps or trunk sections and place a bromeliad or use as a pedestal for pots.
- **Old Chair or Bed Head and Foot Board** - Plant a chair. By removing the seat you can line the open area with chicken wire, sphagnum moss and soil. Plant interest vines and plants. Made a bench out of a bed set. Cut the foot board in half and use as arms. The head board as the back and all you need is some scrap lumber for the seat. Paint this in fun colors and design and you have a one of a kind garden art treasure.
- **Wind Chimes** - Anything can become wind chimes. String up old cutlery, shells, bamboo, copper pipe even nuts and bolts. Try different things for different sounds.
- **Light** - Give your garden a night mood by place candles in jars, clay pots, tin cans or any of you finds. Make your own luminaries.

Just look around the house and you will be surprised at what you can use. Extend your style and personality to your yard. Have fun and enjoy your garden.