

Creating A Terrarium

Franklin Park Conservatory

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES





STEP 1

Select a Container



Selecting a container.....

Look for clear glass and a flat bottom

Can be with or without a top

Wash even new containers

Selecting a container.....

Short, wide ones work best

Tall, curved ones collect more moisture

Can be with or without a lid

Be sure you can reach in to arrange
plants

Selecting a container.....

TIP: Lidded containers collect
moisture

Best for tropical plants, like Venus fly
trap

Selecting a container.....

Use open (non-lidded) containers for
lower-moisture plants

Craft/garden stores have endless
variety of containers

Some clever ideas....



STEP 2

Select plants



Select plants.....

**Choose small plant breeds OR
trimmable plants**

**Match your plants to the biosphere you
want to create**

Select plants.....

Cacti will take arid, high-light
conditions

Tropicals need moist humidity

Some plants want filtered light

Select plants.....

Know, in advance, where the terrarium will be kept – so you can match light to plants' needs

Select plants.....

**Choose plants with the same light &
moisture needs**

Select plants.....

TIP: Know container size when purchasing plants. Terrarium plants are so *incredibly* cute that you'll overbuy!

STEP 3



Assemble other materials



Assemble materials.....

Drainage layer

Charcoal layer

Sphagnum moss layer

Soil layer

Decorations for top of soil

STEP 4

Place about 1/4" of drainage material in the bottom



Drainage layer.....

Keeps the soil and charcoal layers
from becoming saturated

Allows for healthy, “airy” substrate
layer

Drainage layer.....

Use stones, broken terracotta, gravel,
marbles: anything that will allow
drainage



Step 5

Add a ½-inch layer of activated charcoal.

This acts as a filter, removing toxic chemicals from water and soil.

Buy “horticultural charcoal” online or in garden centers

STEP 6

Layer a **thin sheet** of damp sphagnum moss or sheet moss over the charcoal

Before layering, soak moss in water for a few seconds

Squeeze out until just slightly damp



STEP 7

Add at least 1-½ inches of soil

(you need to accommodate the plants'
roots)

Adding the soil.....

Dampen soil ever so slightly

Should be moist, but not muddy

STEP 8

Place plants lightly on the soil – poke holes where you want the plants to go.

Rearrange until you're happy



Placing the plants.....

Poke a hole for each plant

Use chopsticks, pencil – whatever you
have at hand



STEP 9

Insert one plant into each hole

Planting.....

Before planting, trim dead foliage

Plant approximately 1-2" apart

Consider treating with neem oil or
gentle, diluted dish liquid

Planting.....

Gently remove plant from pot

Tease the roots apart to loosen (with fine knitting needle or sharp pencil)

Trim leaves that will touch container walls

STEP 10

DECORATE



Decorating.....

Let your imagination run wild!

**Consider: marbles, miniatures,
seashells, tiny treasures**

Fairy Garden figures

AFTERCARE

Mist (if you didn't moisten soil)

Place for optimal light/warmth

Select location based on your plants'
needs

No temperature extremes

CONTINUED CARE

Lots of live moss? Mist 2/week

Heavy on leafy plants? Mist 1x/week

Succulents? Dry soil out – then water
sparingly

Continued care.....

Avoid direct sunlight.

Use a plant mister (or spray bottle) to
lightly mist foliage and soil layer

If using succulents, wait until soil dries
out to water

Continued care.....

Keep glass clean

Double-check your location: move terrarium if light needs aren't right

Compliment your green thumb!

AVOID COMMON MISTAKES

Too much/too little water

Dirty container

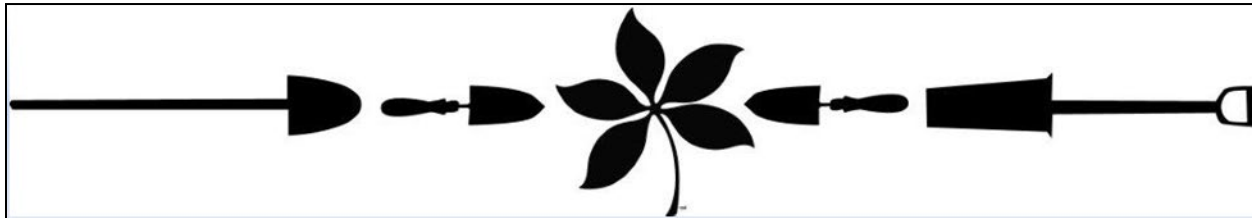
Too close to heat source

Too much direct sunlight

Too little light

THANKS FOR WATCHING!

We hope you enjoy your beautiful,
lasting terrarium



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