

# HOME & GARDEN

CHECK OUT THE DEALS FOR THE SEASON!!

## Container gardening great for small spaces

With increasing interest in container gardening, plant breeders and seed companies are working on vegetables specifically bred for container culture.

Planter boxes with trellises and extra colour for the area. Container gardening presents opportunities for many innovative ideas. Mulch with organic matter such as leaves or wood chips to reduce evaporation from soil.

On a hot patio, you might consider putting the

containers on pallets or other structures that will allow air movement beneath the pots and prevent direct contact with the cement.

Check your containers at least once a day and twice on hot, dry or windy days. Feel the soil to determine whether or not it is damp. Windbreaks can help reduce water requirements for containers.

### Fertilizing

If you use a soil mix with fertilizer added, then your

plants will have enough nutrients for 8-10 weeks. If plants are grown longer than this, then add a water-soluble fertilizer at the recommended rate. Repeat every 2-3 weeks. An occasional dose of fish emulsion or compost will add trace elements to the soil. Do not add more than the recommended rate of any fertilizer, since this may cause fertilizer burn and the death of your plants.

### General Care

Vegetables grown in containers are attacked by the same insects and diseases that are common to any vegetable garden. Plants should be periodically inspected for the presence of foliage-feeding and fruit-feeding insects as well as the occurrence of diseases. Protect plants from very high heat caused by light reflection from pavement. Move them to a cooler spot or shade them during the hottest part of the day. Plants should be moved to a more sheltered location during severe rain, hail, or wind storms, and for protection from fall frosts.

### Indoor Container Gardening

If you want to have fresh vegetables over the winter, or if you don't have an outdoor space in which you can place containers, it is worth trying indoor container gardening.

A bright, sunny window can be the site for growing fresh food all year. Small-fruited tomatoes and peppers, several types of lettuce, radishes, and many herbs are among the plants you can include. Follow the directions given above for preparing pots and for watering, fertilizing, etc. However, note that plants will dry out less quickly indoors and will also grow more slowly, needing less fertilizer.

To make watering easier, set the pots in large trays with an inch or two of decorative stones. Not only will this prevent having to move the plants in order to water them, it will also provide humidity, es-

pecially during winter when the house is warm and dry.

Herbs are a first choice for many indoor gardeners. Many are less demanding

than vegetable plants, and cooks find it pleasant to be able to snip off a few sprigs of fresh parsley or chop some chives from the windowsill herb garden.



Container gardens can be grown indoors or out, and are versatile to your unique location and space available.

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