



**Nurture Nature Center**, located in Easton, Pennsylvania, created an Urban Garden in a small parking area using recycled and found materials to demonstrate low-cost growing techniques for small urban areas (walls, balconies, small paved spaces). This fact sheet is part of a series that features information about demonstrations in the garden that are easy to replicate and implement in a variety of urban spaces.

## Container Gardening

### Description:

Container gardens work well in urban areas where space is often limited to a balcony, patio, terrace, or patio. Any container can be used – ceramic or terracotta pots, old cooking pots, buckets, etc. - just be sure it's sized well for the roots of the plant you want to grow. For example, root vegetables will need deeper soil than something shallow-rooted like lettuce.

### What You'll Need:

- Good quality soil media (see below).
- A container with drain holes.
- Seeds or seedlings.
- Watering can or hose.
- Filter fabric or small stones/gravel.



### Planting in Containers:

Start with a clean, dry container. Every container must have drainage, so add holes to the bottom with a drill as needed. Use fabric liner or small stone/gravel to act as a filter layer in the bottom of the container. This will help keep the soil from leaking out the holes in the bottom. Add a good quality soil media. Ideally your soil is a mix of one part topsoil, one part peat moss or compost and one part perlite or coarse builder's sand.

Next add plants or seeds. For plants, make a hole in the soil large enough to contain the plant's roots system. Cover the roots and press gently to make sure there are no large air pockets in the soil. For seeds, follow the directions on the packet. When you have everything in place, water the container thoroughly.

It's very important to water containers as needed, which can be as often as two or three times a day in hot, dry weather. The best times to water are early in the morning and right around sunset.

**For more information related to Nurture Nature Center's Urban Garden Project, see <http://nurturenaturecenter.org/garden/>**

### Resources:

<http://extension.psu.edu/plants/master-gardener/counties/chester/how-to-gardening-brochures/container-gardening/view>  
<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/containergardening/welcome.cfm>



### Tips:

- Bigger containers often work better outside than smaller ones, which will need to be watered more often.
- You can mix different types of plants in the same container, just be sure the plants have similar needs (i.e., plants that prefer dry conditions in the same pot.)