



# TERRARIUM

Planting a terrarium is a fun and creative project for all ages. It's great for those of us that have a special talent for cultivating and also for those of us that don't have the so called "green thumb". A terrarium is a clear sided container that is self contained and can either be open or enclosed. It is important that the sides (and top) be clear so that the light is not obstructed. Most people can find something in their home to use for a terrarium.

Many different plants will thrive in a terrarium. Select plants that love humidity and are not aggressive growers. If you cover your terrarium you create a mini biosphere that recycles water and nutrients and is practically maintenance free. Routine pruning is required for certain plants if you want to keep a neat appearance.

Planting your terrarium:

- ◆ Clean your container. Vinegar based cleaners will kill disease that may be lurking.
- ◆ Place a 2-3 inch layer of gravel on the bottom. Rinse and drain the rocks first.
- ◆ Next add a layer of moss. This moss layer will prevent the soil from settling into your gravel layer.
- ◆ It is recommended to add a thin layer of charcoal on top of the moss for purification.
- ◆ Add your potting mix. The Bar Harbor organic mix works perfectly, it is nice and light. A 4-6 inch layer should do it. Some people slope the soil to form a landscape, it's really up to you. Tamp the soil lightly before planting. You may need to make special tools if your opening is small. A spool (for tamping) and a small spoon and fork (for planting) taped to long bamboo sticks work nicely.
- ◆ Arrange your plants and water them in gently being careful not to let the water rise above your gravel layer and avoid getting your plant leaves wet. A turkey baster or small spout watering can works well to water down the sides of your container. Add in critters or found objects for artistic appeal. Place in appropriate light and admire your creation!





Tips for success:

- ♦ Never overwater!
- ♦ If your terrarium is enclosed and heavy condensation occurs open the top and let it dry out a bit. This may also indicate a change of setting is necessary...too much light or too much warmth will cause continual condensation.
- ♦ If your terrarium is open check for watering every other week. As soil dries the color will appear much lighter. Terrariums require less watering than your potted plants but it will still need a light watering now and then.
- ♦ Turn your terrarium occasionally so that all the plants get equal light exposure.

### PLANT SELECTION

Bright INDIRECT Light:

- ♦ African Violets – mini
- ♦ Baby Tears
- ♦ Begonias - mini
- ♦ False Aralias
- ♦ Ferns are great but some can be aggressive so choose small cultivars (Button Ferns & Table Ferns) or only plant in a container that is accessible for pruning.
- ♦ Pilea – Aluminum Plant and Artillary Ferns
- ♦ Prayer Plant – Maranta
- ♦ Fittonia – Nerve plant
- ♦ Polka Dot plant
- ♦ Baby Ti
- ♦ Neanthe Bella Palm
- ♦ Nephthytis
- ♦ Earth Star
- ♦ Mounted Tillandsias (air plants)

East Window with Morning Sun:

- ♦ ORCHIDS – best to mount or keep in pots – need good air circulation
- ♦ Carnivorous Plants – needs a sphagnum mixture instead of potting mix

