

## Dish Gardening

**WebQuest Description:** This WebQuest will inform the viewer on how to prepare a dish garden in different occasion.

**Grade Level:** College / Adult

**Curriculum:** Art / Music

**Keywords:** Garden Plate, Flowers, Plants, Decorations and Gravel sand.

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### Introduction

A dish garden is an arrangement of plants placed inside dishware. Unlike plant pots, dishes don't have drainage holes. The main difference between a potted floral arrangement in a gardening pot and a dish garden is that actual dishware is used. The dishware used in dish gardens may be everyday items such as cereal bowls or coffee mugs or they may be ornamental pieces. Dish Gardening is the art of planting small ornamental in pots, shallow vases or dishes. Or it is in itself a miniature garden which you can carry them to any part of your home.

### Tasks

I prepared some task to enhance your designing capability . . . . .

1. Collect some items which for you can give art or can be used in designing like for example white sand, stones, marbles, and etc...
2. Gather beautiful and attractive flowers or plants for example shrub, bonsai, flowering plants, orchids, etc...
3. Prepare a pot, glass vase, cans or anything which you can use in making your dish garden.
4. Think of a particular occasion or place on where you're going to put the said dish garden.
5. Lastly make your own design of dish garden.

\*\*\*MAKE IT IN YOUR OWN WAY (UNIQUE) \*\*\*

\*\*\*Remember: Your way of designing reflects your personality. \*\*\*



look for the perfect planter, keep an eye opened for miniature garden accents that may be appropriate.

- \* Among other things, I once discovered a ten inch wheelbarrow with a set of miniature tools. Although it was made to be an ornament on its own, this was a perfect planter for the gardener in the house.
- \* Any basket, old or new, can be used by simply placing a non-draining container inside of it.
- \* For the fisherman... an old fishing creel can be easily lined with plastic and planted, or used to simply cover your actual planting container.
- \* Dollar stores always seem to have a few mini-planters depicting a deer, a duck, a cow or a truck. Although they are usually only suited for a single small plant (which usually outgrows it quickly,) they are sure to bring an instant smile...
- \* Small logs can be hollowed out... A great home for a small fern forest.
- \* Adobe bowls look great as "cactus scapes", when filled with small succulent plants.
- \* A rusted milk can, old boot, even an old pet dish can be given a new use in life.
- \* The ultimate dish garden, of course is a terrarium, which is easily made from old aquariums or jars.

### Choosing Appropriate Dish Gardening Plants

Unfortunately, because dish gardens typically have limited root space, the plants will tend to outgrow their home rather quickly. For this reason, it is a good idea to choose slow growing plants to prevent having to replace them too often. Choose plants which have the same general lighting and water requirements as your other choices.

### Setting Up and Planting Your Dish Garden

Adequate drainage is probably the most important provision to ensure the success of your dish garden.

The best method of draining the excess water from the soil, is through drainage holes in the bottom of the planter. The hole(s) should be covered with a piece of broken pottery or a screen patch, to prevent the soil from washing out. This type of planter will require placing a water tight tray under the garden, to protect the table or other surfaces from water damage. In situations where there is no external drainage, you will have to cover the bottom of the container with a minimum of a one to two inch layer of pea gravel or coarse charcoal. The gravel should then be covered with a piece of nylon stocking or window screen to keep the soil from sifting down into the gravel, rendering it useless for drainage.

Use a good commercial potting soil, to which you have added coarse sand or perlite to aid in the drainage. Add a sufficient layer of this soil mix, so that when you set the new plants in place, their soil level will be about 1/2 inch below the rim of the planter.

### Landscaping your Dish Garden

If the planter is sufficiently large, you may create different levels of terrain within your garden. Firm this soil layer lightly. Without removing the plants from their pots, try different planting arrangements. Don't forget to consider any garden "accents" which you plan to use, during this planning stage.

Arrange the plants according to how the dish garden is most likely to be viewed. As a centerpiece, for example, you would want the tallest plant in the center, so that the display would be viewable from all angles. If the garden will only be seen from one vantage point, however, you would want the tallest plants in the rear. Don't over-plant your garden for the sake of having it look immediately full. By adding fewer plants, you will have a healthier garden which will fill in quickly, and last much longer.

Adding Plants to Your Dish Garden  
 Make sure that the plants are thoroughly watered before proceeding!

Once you have your master plan worked out, you are ready to plant and landscape your dish garden. The plants can be easily removed from their pots, with their entire root structure unscathed, and ready for planting.

Support the plant by placing your fingers over the soil, forming a 'V' around, but not touching the stem of the plant. Turn the entire plant over, and give the pot a light rap with a screwdriver handle. This should dislodge the root ball, allowing the pot to be easily lifted off.

Normally, at this point of transplanting any potted plant, you would want to lightly loosen the outer roots of the ball. Because a slow growth rate is desired in most dish gardens, it is better to just leave the roots alone in this case. Remove the pots from two or three of your plants at a time, beginning with the tallest plants first. Set these plants into position, making any final adjustments as to where they will "face". Fill in around each plant with fresh planting mix, and then continue with this process until all of the plants are in place. Add more soil as needed to fill in areas. Pack the soil gently, and water it lightly.

You can top the soil with a mulch of fine bark or small gravel. Accents like small twigs and stones can be used to hide any bare plant stems, or to highlight an area of the garden. Any other ornaments you choose to add to your landscape, will add to the artistry, the character, and the personal touch...

Your dish garden should be kept in a spot where it will receive the correct amount of light for the chosen plants. "Full sun" type dish gardens should be gradually adjusted to their permanent window area to prevent sun burn. Place them in bright, indirect light first. Each day, for a week, move them closer, until they are in the "full sun" spot.

#### Watering and Caring for Your Dish Garden

Allow the soil in your dish garden to become nearly dry, before you add a small amount of water again (start with a cup or so...). Never allow the soil to become too dry, or too soggy. Experience will quickly teach you how much, and how often to water.

Generally you will not have to fertilize your dish garden. The plants will seldom be in place long enough to deplete the nutrients from their soil, before they are moved on to a bigger planter. Of course, if the plants have been in the same soil for too long you can feed them, but use a VERY dilute 1/4 strength liquid house plant food.

With a little care, your dish garden will become an ornament for your home, and a living memory.

## Evaluation

The user or the designer will be evaluated according to the criteria below.

Category and Score	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT	Score
Uniqueness	A common design	Similarity in some concepts	Beautiful -Showing own design	Very good.Unique.Beautiful.	30
Creativity	Does not show creativeness.	Showing creativeness in few aspects.	Showing creativity in some aspects.	Exposing full talent of creating a design.	20

Category and Score	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT	Score
Materials used	Does not follow the proper materials to be used in dish gardening.	Some of the materials are not properly used.	Used the materials properly.	Prepare all the materials needed and are used properly.	25
Design organization	Does not organize the design or the proper position of the plants and design properly.	Fair design but does not follow the proper organization of design.	Nice job. Keep up the good work. Practice more for the perfection.	Excellent.nice job.Have a very good and organize design. The plants are properly organize in its proper position or place.	25
Total Score					100%

## Conclusion

After this the viewer will know and appreciate dish gardening and will consider this as a hobby or a profitable pastime. Designing a dish garden is relaxing based on my own experience.

Dish gardening can be consider as an art. In which art reflects someone's personality. Through arts you can express your ideas and feelings. Though an art is broad, but still it depends upon your thoughts and opinions or ways on how to show what is an art for you.