

Miniature Gardens



Use natural resources to create miniature gardens. This is such a lovely activity to do and very restful. Many people will remember doing similar things in their childhoods but it also offers great benefits for adults.



Benefits

- Restful and creative activities like miniature gardens can be very therapeutic. They also build cognitive confidence as the participant plans and lays out the design and makes changes along the way.
- By watching how an individual's garden takes shape, we can get some clues as to what people would like in a garden. This is a great way to start conversations about their own gardening experiences. This activity can therefore be used as a consultation tool, as people build the type of garden they would like to see and use.
- Whilst this is generally a good activity for one person, inviting someone to join in can improve conversation and cooperation as they work on the space together.

Things to remember

- As with anything be careful if you are using small items that could potentially be ingested.
- If you are creating a mini garden that might be around for a while then be careful how heavy it becomes with the loading of soil – make sure to lift it carefully.
- Wash hands after engaging in all activities involving collecting natural items.



How to

What you will need

- A tray or flat box within which to create the miniature garden.
- Natural resources such as sand or soil, small stones, flowers, pebbles, sticks and twigs, lichen, moss.
- You can also have some back up resources available such as tin foil for ponds if you wish.

- Find a suitable container or pot for your miniature garden. You could use a seed tray, a large flower pot or even a basket as in our image overleaf. Even a large foil tray would work but it will need extra support so perhaps put it on a sturdy tray.
- If you want the end result to last a while then make sure that there is a sound earth base with drainage and you can then plant small plants into the tray – they will need regular watering though as the shallow tray will dry out quickly.
- Ideally your container should have drainage holes so that the water will drain through when you water your mini garden.
- Fill the container with an even layer of soil or potting compost (available at garden centres) up to just below the rim.
- Spend a little time collecting the items that you want to use in the mini garden. You can include anything you like - pebbles and twigs to make shelters and seating areas, moss for bushes and foil or an old mirror for a pond or water feature for example. It can be really useful to have a bag of play sand available as this can make a great addition. If you want to put real water into your garden then do make sure you have a waterproof base. You can use mini plants in your garden, just remember to water them!
- As you start to build the garden, you can talk about what makes a good garden design and this may give you some ideas for your own outdoor space.
- You can use some of the questions below to help
- Did you / do you have a garden at home?
- Do you enjoy being outdoors?
- Would you like to get outside more?
- If so, what stops you going outside more?
- What changes would you like to make to our garden here?
- Let's think about different parts of the garden - flowers - what colours do you like? do you have a favourite flower? What about an area to sit and have a cup of tea? Would you like to grow fruit or vegetables? How could we attract wildlife to our garden?
- Use flowers, foliage, twigs and other materials to represent various aspects of the garden such as lawn, flower beds, veg beds etc.
- Most of all have fun and don't forget to take photos of your garden and then remember to water it!

To find out more visit: www.ltl.org.uk
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