



### Go Green Northbrook

is a non-affiliated, grassroots organization composed of residents of Northbrook, IL. Our mission is to bring about initiatives and education in our community that promote environmental consciousness, outdoor enthusiasm, and a healthy, sustainable approach to living. We are a group for anyone willing to make an effort — small or large — towards encouraging and leading an environmentally thoughtful life.

## How to Lead a Terrarium Project

A terrarium is a mini indoor garden.

Decide if you will create open or closed terrariums. Closed terrariums do not require watering as the water cycle is closed. Open terrariums require watering. We found that items for closed terrariums tend to be more expensive than materials for open terrariums.

If creating open terrariums, you can use either succulent plants, like cacti or air plants, or very small plants. Check with your local garden center to see if they have materials for fairy gardens or other recommends. This guide outlines the creation of open, non-succulent terrariums.

### **Budget:**

\$300 for 30 students

### **Time:**

Approximately 20 minutes for project plus 10 minutes for clean up for groups of ten 6-11 years olds.

### **Materials:**

**Container:** 30 containers or one for each child. *Each container should be at least 5–6 inches deep without holes in the bottom (since for indoor use), and can be almost anything. Glass is a traditional material, but check with your local resale shop for other unique options such as a mixing bowls. Resale options will likely cost less than new containers. With some effort, containers can cost less than \$1 each.*

**Drainage materials:** 3 packages of rocks or Better Than Rocks (BTR). *Because your container does not have holes in the bottom for drainage, you need a place for excess water to go. If using a glass container, we recommend using rocks for drainage. If your container is opaque, try using BTR, a recycled plastic material that will keep your terrarium a bit lighter. If using BTR, cut in advance for each container.*

**Soil:** 2–3 bags of indoor potting soil. *Plan on an inch or two more depth than the root ball of your plants (which are probably about 3 inches).*

**Ground Cover:** 1 small bag of sheet moss or pea gravel. *Lay this across the top of your soil. It will enhance the look of your terrarium, help retain moisture in the soil, minimize splash when you water.*

**Plants:** 90 plants (3 per student at approximately \$2 each). *We've found great success with Lyssum, Celosia and Thymus Minus for full sun terrariums. Also, they are good with medium to dry soil. Choose according to your light requirements. Consult with your local garden center.*

**Ornament (optional):** 1 whimsical ornament or small figurine and/or 2–3 glass beads per student. *We found exciting options like butterflies, hedgehogs, and glass beads in a variety pack of clear, green, and two shades of blue.*

### **Directions:**

1. Wash and dry your container.
2. Place drainage materials along the bottom of the container, about 1 inch deep.
3. Add soil almost to the top, leaving room to add the plants and some more soil.
4. Water lightly to tamp down the soil.
5. Add plants and more soil to keep the plants firmly in place. Added soil should just cover the tops of the root/dirt balls of the plants.
6. Add a layer of the ground cover sheet moss or pea gravel. Water lightly to level things out.
7. Add ornaments.

And, you're done! Our sincere thanks to Red's Garden Center (Northbrook, IL), Etsy.com's Lovely Terrariums, and SproutHome.com. **GGN**

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