

### Supplies Needed:

- Container
- Drainage Materials – rocks and/or horticulture charcoal
- Soil
- Plants
- Decorations (optional)

### Instructions:

A dish garden is an assortment of small plants that grow together in a shallow dish/bowl. The plants used in a dish garden generally stay small, grow at slow rates, and should be compatible with each other. Dish gardens can be like a miniature ecosystem. Many times, people choose themes for dish gardens and include small decorations and trinkets.

First, decide where your dish garden will be – indoors, outdoors, full-sun, partial-sun, shade, etc. This will determine what type of plants you will need.

Next, find your container. Most dish garden containers are fairly shallow and do not have drainage holes in the bottom. Look for interesting objects – metal cans, bowls, baskets, etc. Traditional flower pots can also be great dish gardens. You will want the container to provide enough space for water drainage and for roots to grow. A minimum of 3 inches deep is recommended.

Add a thin layer of rocks and/or horticulture charcoal to cover the entire bottom of the dish garden. This helps provide drainage and to prevent the soil from molding.

Next, add potting soil. If you are planting succulents or cacti, add some sand to your soil mixture.

Finally, plan your dish garden. Consider placing your plants and trinkets in the garden and viewing it from all angles, including close-up and far away. Remember that plants have different heights and widths, so you will want some plants that will grow tall and narrow while other plants will be short and spread. After deciding your plan, dig holes in the soil where your plants will go.

Carefully place the plants in the holes you have prepared and cover the roots with soil. Gently pat the soil around each plant to help hold it in place. Give plants a little bit of water. You may consider adding decorative rocks or mulch to the top of your dish garden. This simply covers the soil. Over time, you'll want to maintain your dish garden by watering it only when the soil is dry. Enjoy!

*Note: Many times, 4-H'ers can enter their dish gardens in local and state fair competitions. If you are interested in entering your dish garden into a contest, check with your 4-H leader about rules, size requirements, etc.*

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