

DIRTY FINGERNAILS AND ALL

No space, no problem—the sky’s the limit

BY SIOUX ROGERS



Sioux Rogers

So you have absolutely no space to plant even a weed or the soil available is awful. *No problem!* You have plenty of space but have already filled it to the max. *No problem!*

Container gardening, with any sort of container, is fun, creative, portable, and allows specific needs of each plant to be customized for the resident plant. Put on your creative gardener’s cap and expand your growing space, up and out. Sky’s the limit.

Getting started you will need to follow a few basics, actually the same as you would if planting an in-ground garden. Check the specific planting needs for each item you want to grow. Follow the tips listed below and all will be fine.

- 1. Do not mix sun-loving plants with shade lovers in the same container.
- 2. Do not put a plant with an unquenchable need for water with a plant that hates much water.
- 3. If using a small container, make sure roots have enough wiggle room.
- 4. Keep the soil in each container specific to the exact needs of its plants.

Before the fun begins, disclaimer in place: This little article will not explain what to plant, what type of soil to use, how to plant, or how to

drill holes, hammer nails, water or feed plants. This sweet but short “chat” is happening because I did over-plant and I did run out of space! Fortunately, I had an ah-ha moment. I remembered I could plant just about anything anywhere, in any direction, horizontal or vertical, without a care. This monumental achievement is made possible by using pallets, gutters, and sewer pipes, often free or very inexpensive. A new adventure may be coming your way! Think outside the invisible box.

It’s time to go skyward, my friend, up and out. So far, still plenty of room up there. Vertical and horizontal garden planting is simply a geometric referral to the placement of the container(s): up and down or side by side and which way what is growing.

By allowing your plants to grow up and out instead of spreading on the ground, they have far more room to produce vegetables. This also leaves a very small footprint.

If you decide to use pallets for a new garden, you will need to make them plant friendly. Staple some landscape material to the back and the inside of the front, which may be a little awkward. Fill the entire pallet with the excellent soil, appropriate for what you are planting. On the side where the plants are to be placed, cut slits in the fabric. If this will be a hanging pallet, make sure you have very strong hooks, as it will be very heavy. Best if you hang the pallet after it is lined but before adding soil.

Some information about pallets. All pallets are not created equally. Most are safe but some older pallets may have been treated with a very bad chemical, methane bromide. It is very toxic. Those pallets will have a “MB” stamp somewhere on the edge. If you see the letters “CH” it is from China and best to avoid. If you see the letters “US” or “CA” those are safe to use. Best to avoid painted pallets as you have no idea of the paint’s toxicity.

PVC pipes are excellent for planting either vertically or horizontally. For

instance, a 12”-circumference PVC pipe with 6” holes drilled at intervals can be hung vertically or horizontally. Whichever way, make sure it is fastened securely, as it will be a holy mess if it falls.

For wonderful ideas and instructions on making a horizontal or vertical garden use the following in your search engines: vertical gardening,

horizontal gardening, planting in PVC pipe, pallet gardening. Ideas range from wild and wonderful to stable but silly.

Garden for peas of mind and lettuce us be thankful,
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Untreated pallets make economical planters.
Photo: rebeccasbirdgardensblog.blogspot.com.



Vertical gardens pack in more plants without expanding the garden’s footprint.
Photo: countryliving.com.



No room to spread out? Spread up!
Photo: familyhandyman.com

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