

BASIC GARDENING

a lesson for older children, teens, and adults

- Knowledge** After working through this lesson, participants will be able to:
- Attitude**
- Practice**
1. Describe different types of gardens.
 2. Plant a container garden.
 3. Make compost
- Overview** This lesson is based on material from the Health Education Program for Developing Communities, along with other sources.
- Materials** *Collect these items before beginning the lesson:*
- Poster-size paper, markers, and masking tape
 - Role Play
 - Handouts:
 - *Gardens*
 - *Compost*

LESSON

60 minutes

Role Play: (5 minutes)

Use the attached role play or starter.

Ask SHO Questions:

What did you See?

What was Happening?

Does this happen in Our place?

Why Plant a Garden? (10 minutes)

A. What are some reasons to plant a garden?

1. To have fresh fruits and vegetables
2. To avoid pesticides
3. To save money
4. To eat healthy food
5. For better tasting food
6. The whole family can work together.
7. To grow the foods that you like.
8. It is fun!
9. To have exercise
10. To reduce stress

B. What are some challenges to growing a garden?

1. We don't have much space.
2. I don't know how to do it.
3. What seeds shall we plant?
4. Where do we get the supplies?
5. We don't have good soil.

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- C.** Give out the *Gardens* illustration. What are some different types of gardens?
1. One is a traditional garden, with trenches between the rows.
 2. Another garden is planted inside a wooden box.
 3. Tomatoes are growing from a tire garden.
 4. A clay pot and an old bucket are used for gardens.
- D.** What is a container garden?
1. A container garden is planted inside a container, such as a tire, a flowerpot, or an old bucket.
 2. Anything can be used to make a container!

Container Gardens (20 minutes)

Instructions: Container gardens. Divide in small groups to answer these questions:

- Why use a container garden?
 - What kind of container can you use?
 - How can you make a container garden?
 - What could you grow in a container garden?
- A.** Why use a container garden?
1. They don't need much space.
 2. You can grow them on a window ledge or in a small apartment.
 3. They don't need as much water.
 4. You can also put them on a cement sidewalk, or on the roof.
- B.** What kind of container can you use?
1. Anything!
 2. But it must be able to hold water.
 3. Poke a hole in the bottom so that extra water can drain out.
 4. You can use an old tire.
 5. Or half a soda bottle
 6. Or an old tennis shoe or boots, with a hole in the bottom
 7. Or a metal or plastic pail
 8. Or baskets
 9. Or an old pot
- C.** What can you grow in a container garden?
1. Tomatoes
 2. Lettuce
 3. Potatoes
 4. Strawberries
 5. Cherry tomatoes
 6. Many other small or compact plants
 7. Flowers
 8. Old tires can be used to grow small fruit trees.

Making a Container Garden (10 minutes)

Instructions: Making a container garden. Remain in your small groups. Give each group a soda bottle cut in two, a nail, soil, water, and seeds.

- A.** How do you make a container garden?
1. Wash the container. Put holes in the bottom for drainage. (Poke holes in the bottom of the soda bottle with a nail or other tool.)
 2. Fill the container with soil or potting soil.

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3. Plant the seeds or seedlings and cover them with soils.
 4. Push down the dirt over the seeds.
 5. Water gently. Add water and wait for the water to settle. Add more water, a bit at a time, until water starts to seep out of the holes at the bottom.
 6. You may need to add more soil if the soil level shrinks down.
 7. Keep the soil moist until the seeds sprout.
- B.** Take time to prepare the container and plant the seeds.
1. Plant the seeds.
- C.** What can you do if you don't have potting soil or good soil?
1. You can add fertilizer.
 2. You can add compost to the soil.

Compost (15 minutes)

Instructions: Give each small group a copy of *Compost*. Read the sheet to find out:

- What is compost?
 - What layers are needed?
 - How do you care for a compost pile?
- A.** Compost
1. Compost is a type of fertilizer.
 2. It is made from rotting plants.
 3. Compost is cheap and easy to make.
 4. The plants are broken down by bacteria (germs).
- B.** What layers are needed?
1. Not all compost piles are as fancy as the one in the drawing.
 2. It is a good idea to have brown layers with dry materials such as dry leaves, old grass, cardboard, straw, or shredded newspaper.
 3. Green layers contain fresh grass clippings, or fruit and vegetables—materials that are moist.
 4. You can also add layers of compost, ash, and manure (if you can get them).
- C.** How do you care for a compost pile?
1. Repeat the layers 3 or 4 times.
 2. Keep the layers moist.
 3. Keep the layers exposed to air.
 4. Turn over the contents of the compost pile every 2-3 weeks or so.
 5. The compost will be ready to use in your garden in about 3-6 months.

Conclusion and Take-Away (5 minutes)

Discuss together:

- A.** How will we apply this?
- B.** Where can we grow a garden?
- C.** What shall we grow?

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References:

Container Garden Ideas for Kids. 2013. Available from: <http://www.clean-organized-family-home.com/garden-kids-container.html#sthash.pmkzH6LC.dpbs>

Container Gardening Guide. KidsGardening Available from: <http://www.kidsgardening.org/article/container-gardening-guide>

Health Education Program for Developing Communities. Available from: <https://hepfdc.org/>

Simple English Wikipedia. *Compost*. 2014. Available from: <http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compost>

BASIC GARDENING - STARTER

Role play:

Instructions: Two people are talking.

1st: I want to plant a garden.

2nd: No way! That won't work!

1st: Why not?

2nd: There's no room! We live in a small apartment in the city.

1st: There must be a way. I'm going to check it out.

2nd: I'd rather just go to the grocery store.

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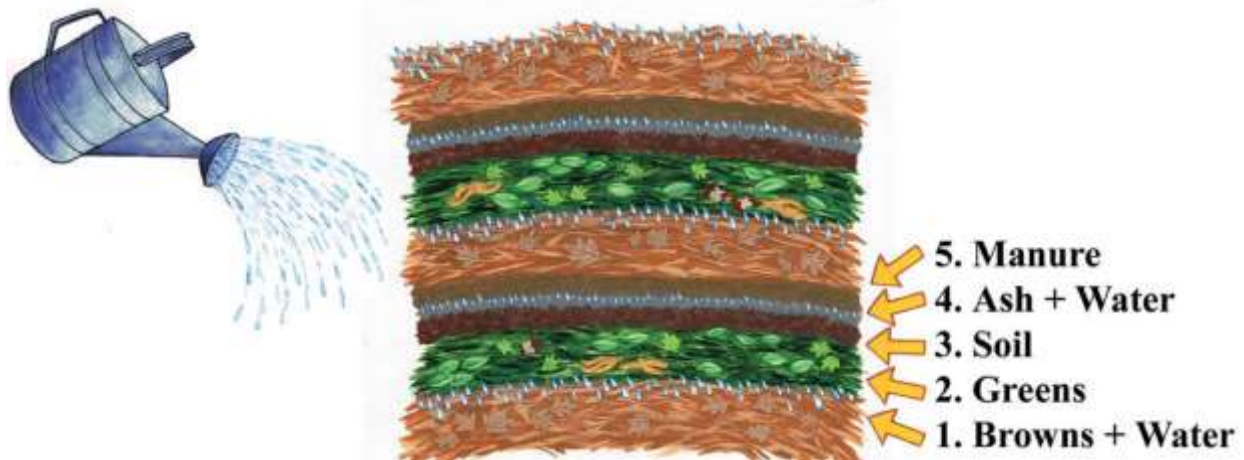
GARDENS



Source of illustrations: Health Education Program for Developing Communities, 2014

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COMPOST



Compost Bins: Fruit and vegetable kitchen waste and other plant materials such as leaves and grass can be composted in family, school or community compost bins. After a couple months the contents can be removed and used to provide valuable enrichment for your gardens.

Many different designs of bins as well as different contents can be used. The site is usually under a tree and close to water so that contents can be kept somewhat moist. To improve exposure to air, smaller piles about 3 foot (1 meter) high and 3-5 foot wide are often recommended (If available, a 12 foot length of 3 foot high wire (hardware cloth) fencing can be used to encircle the contents). As a minimum, it should include layers of carbon containing (Brown) and nitrogen containing (Green) materials. The materials should be chopped up as much as possible (decreases composting time). A common design includes alternating layers of the following:

1) Browns: Carbon containing (mostly brown) material (dry leaves and grasses, straw, corn stalks, shredded newspaper, cardboard, paper towels, and napkins). Sprinkle with water so that contents are damp.

2) Greens: Nitrogen containing (mostly green) material (grass clippings, fresh leaves and twigs, vegetable and fruit trimmings, and coffee grounds and filters.-Most any organic material that has moisture or 'life' still in it is considered a green material).

You can also add a thin layer of **3) Composted Soil** (includes beneficial worms and insects to help break down the materials).

If available, you can also add a thin layer of **4) Ash** (includes potassium and other minerals). Sprinkle with water.

If available, you can also add a thin layer of **5) Manure of plant-eating animals** (includes additional nutrients). The manure of flesh-eating animals should not be used (includes harmful worm eggs, etc).

Repeat the layers 3 or 4 times. The compost contents should be kept somewhat moist and exposed to air as much as possible (The contents are usually turned over every 2-3 weeks or so.-The more often it is turned, the sooner the compost will be ready for use). Dairy and other animal products should not be added (Cause bad odors and attract flies and vermin).

Source: Health Education Program for Developing Communities. Available from: <https://hepfdc.org/>