

TOMATOES IN SMALL SPACES

Make your own upside-down tomato planter

DO IT YOURSELF...

Step-by-step

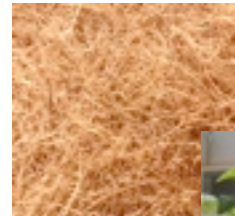


Growing your own food can be enlightening and rewarding but gardening in small urban spaces can be challenging! Making your own upside-down tomato planter is a great way to grow your own tomatoes and herbs on a balcony or small patio. Since the planter hangs and herbs can be planted on top of the tomato plant it makes efficient use of valuable space!

Step 1:

Gather Supplies.

You will need: a five gallon bucket, good potting soil, a drill with a 2 inch bit (or a box cutter), 1 tomato plant (patio tomatoes or Roma tomatoes work well because their roots don't go very deep), 4 herb plants, a bit of coconut fiber or a couple of coffee filters and a hook or some other method of hanging your planter.



Step 2:

Make a hole in the bucket.

Drill a 2-2 1/2 inch hole through the bottom of the bucket. I think a drill is easiest but it can also be done [very carefully] with a sharp box cutter.

Step 3:

Ensure proper drainage.

Take 2 half moon shaped pieces of coconut fiber and use it to line the bottom of the bucket. The fiber will allow water to drain from the planter but keep the dirt from washing away. *Coconut fiber can be found at many garden stores but a couple of coffee filters will work just as well.





Step 4:

Plant your tomato!

Move the coconut fiber to expose the hole you drilled and carefully thread the tomato plants leaves and stalks through from the inside of the bucket. Then flip the bucket and pull the coconut fiber around the stem of the plant to keep ensure the soil stays put. Using a good potting soil, fill the bucket leaving 2-3 inches at the top for the next step.

Step 6:

Plant the herbs!

Plant a variety of herbs that grow low or you will use often. Try herbs like thyme, parsley and oregano but feel free to experiment with other veggies or even plant flowers!

Water immediately after planting and then again ever 2-3 days.



Step 7:

Hang and enjoy!

Hang your planter in the sunniest spot possible! After the first day or so the tomato plant will turn its leaves over and start growing!

Most patio tomatoes will take around 2 months to flower and start producing fruit but the herbs can be used right away. If the herbs grow too large to quickly you can also trim and dry them for later use.