

Green Fingers!

In the Winter 2012 issue of Nature's Web we talked about the waste pyramid and how we can reuse the waste we produce in other ways. The garden is a great place to recycle and you would be really surprised at what you could reuse, especially when growing seeds. Check out these tips below. Remember that when growing seeds, the compost should be kept moist but not too wet!



Put empty toilet rolls on a plastic tray. Fill the rolls with compost and sow a seed in each (such as peas and beans). The whole rolls can be planted in the ground, without disturbing the roots, when the seedling is large enough.



Egg trays make good seed trays. Moisten the tray first, fill with compost and put a single seed in each section. Place inside a resealable plastic bag to prevent them drying out. When the seedlings are big enough transplant them.



Yoghurt pots and similar containers are great for growing seeds. Remember to put a hole in the bottom to allow drainage.



Paint tin cans to make colourful flower and herb pots. Use acrylic paints so the paint doesn't wash off. If planting directly into the tin can, ask an adult to make a hole in the bottom with a hammer and nail.



Milk and similar cartons are good for growing smaller plants. They are sturdy and hold moisture in the compost. They may need cutting down if very tall. Remember to put a hole in the bottom.



Some vegetable trays are perfect seed trays. Make some drainage holes in the bottom and fill with compost. Scatter the seeds on the top and space out (depending on the seed) and cover with a light sprinkling of compost.



Peas and beans, which don't like their roots to be disturbed, can be planted in old pieces of rain gutter. Fill with compost, sow the seeds and when they are big enough, plant outside, sliding the row of seedlings into a prepared trench.



Newspaper can be shaped into compostable pots. There are a number of different ways to make them. It might take a little bit of detective work online (ask an adult for help) but it's an inexpensive way to make pots.



Once you have sown your seeds you will want to remember what's what. Clothes pegs, old plastic cutlery and lollipop sticks are great for using as labels. Write the seed type with a permanent markers.

Images courtesy of Susan Murphy Wickens