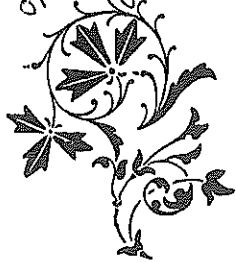


Note that small ones can be made w/ Mason jars or thick plastic such as the packaging from a cooked chicken from whole foods or Safeway

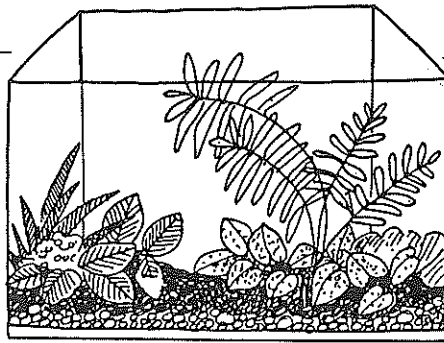


Terraria were all the rage in the 19th century when Victorian households were not considered complete without a glass case planted with ferns.

The first botanical garden in Europe was founded in Padua, Italy in 1545.

PLANT PARADISE

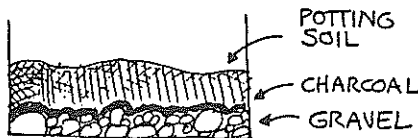
You can create your own landscape indoors with living plants. Make a terrarium out of an old aquarium or glass bottle for a landscape that will practically take care of itself.



TERRARIUM
Glass aquarium, at least 10-gallon size
Gravel
Charcoal - <i>activated charcoal</i>
Potting soil
Humidity-loving plants, such as ferns, mosses, and small flowering species like miniature African violets
Mister

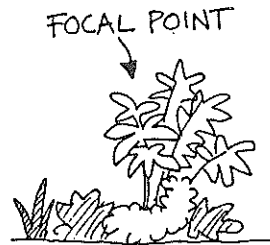
Note Your local garden center will have everything you need for your terrarium (except the container).

1. Wash the aquarium with soap and water; rinse well. Place a 1/2" layer of gravel on the bottom of the aquarium. On top of this sprinkle a layer of charcoal. Put about 2" of damp potting soil over this.



2. Remove each plant from its pot by holding it upside-down in one hand and giving the pot a sharp tap. The plant should fall right out into your hand.

3. Make a shallow depression for each plant in the potting soil. Place each plant in position, spreading its roots out horizontally and packing potting soil around it. (This helps to slow the growth of the plants somewhat.) Arrange the plants so that there is a focal point (a tall plant) and an interesting mix of colors and textures, just as you would if you were planning a drawing.



4. Spray the plants with the mister. Cover the top of the aquarium with a sheet of glass or with foil. Place the terrarium in indirect light, away from a heater.

Tip Terraria thrive with minimal care. Remove the lid for a short time if condensation collects on the inside of the glass; sponge away any algae that forms. Remove any dead leaves and blossoms, and trim those plants that are growing fast.

Variations on a Theme

For a different type of indoor landscape, plant a desert garden. Cacti and succulents can be grown together in a shallow container, even one without drainage holes. Put down a layer of gravel followed by a two-to-one mix of potting soil and sand.

Wear thick gloves when you transplant the cacti, or wrap a strip of folded newspaper around the plants to protect your hands from the sharp spines.

