

How to: build a terrarium in a 2 liter soda bottle

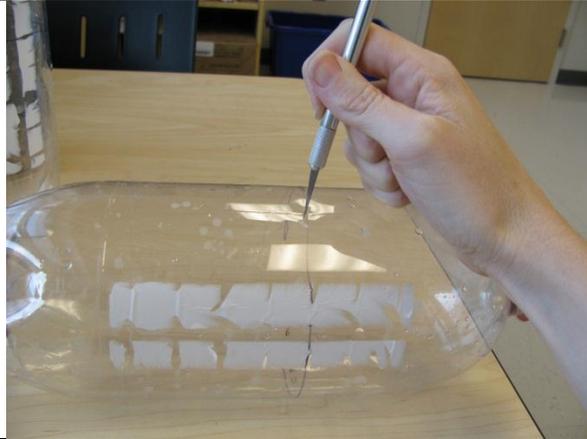
1) Wash and rinse the bottle,
remove label, and allow to dry



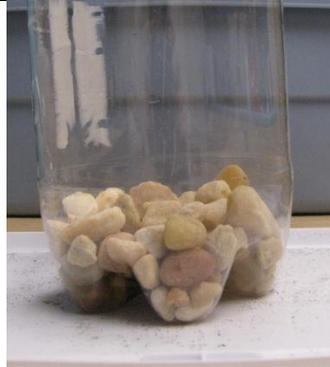
2) Draw a straight line across the
bottle a little more than halfway
up



3) Carefully cut the bottle into two pieces



4) Fill with pebbles for drainage



5) Place a layer of sphagnum moss on top of the pebbles. This will prevent soil from filling in the space between the pebbles.



6) Add a small amount of activated charcoal (available from an aquarium or pet-store) on top of the moss. This step is optional, but if you plan on keeping your terrarium for a while, activated charcoal will filter the water.



7) Add a small amount of soil.



8) Place your plant in the bottle and arrange it the way you want.



9) Add soil around your plant until the soil is at the same level as the base of the plant.



10) Water your plant. Some water will collect in the base of the bottle.



11) Decorate! Add pebbles, stones, shells, or other decorations to your terrarium to make it special. Make sure everything is the way you want it before you move on to the final step.



12) Close the bottle.
TA-DA!



If you are planting seeds, change steps 8 and 9 to “place a few inches of soil in the bottle and plant seeds according to the depth indicated on your seed packet. “ Make sure that when decorating you do not place decorations directly on top of planted seeds.

Caring for your terrarium:

Place the bottle somewhere it will get sunlight, and turn it occasionally so that your plant grows straight. Drops of moisture will form on the inside of the bottle, this is normal. Your plant will absorb water through its roots from the soil, and some of that water will go into the bottle through the plant’s leaves as your plant transpires (<http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/watercycletranspiration.html>). The transpired water will collect on the inside of the bottle and then drip down and reenter the soil.

If you notice that no water droplets have formed in a while, you can take the top off of the bottle and add a little water by allowing it to drip down the inside of the bottle. If you add too much, don’t worry, just leave the top off for a bit and some of the water will evaporate into the air.