

Suggestions for creative gardeners

Your columnist is always finding new ideas which may be fun for some of you to try. To me, that's the joy of being a gardener, it is a growing experience.

Bedding Plants Inc. shares these ideas with us. To create a Flower-Bed-in-a-Bag you will need: one bag of soil mix, three cubic feet, sharp knife; four white petunias; four red petunias; four pink ivy geraniums.

Place the bag of soil mix in position and cut six Xs, three by four inches, in the top of the bag about five inches apart. Also cut small (about one inch) Vs along sides of the bag for drainage (three on each side).

Plant two flowers in each of the six holes created by the X's on top and water each of the holes, making sure water reaches the soil mix to saturate thoroughly.

THIS IDEA would be ideal for any category of plants you wish. Try a vegetable garden with patio tomatoes, regular tomatoes, lettuce and peppers. For a shady location use coleus, nicotiana, impatiens, wax bo-

gonias or lobelia. For an herb garden consider parsley, chives, oregano, sage, rosemary and basil or create a miniature strawberry patch.

Keep your garden-in-a-bag watered as needed. It will not dry out as quickly as other "container" gardens do. Add plant food to the water periodically according to directions.

The above idea would be interesting for a homebound person. It would be good for a person who has limited strength and mobility. In a nursing home clients could have their own contained garden with little care.

There are many ideas for displaying colorful summer plants in your garden. Use castoff clay drainage tiles to create exciting Towers of Flowers. All you need are clay drainage tiles (easy to obtain from a local construction firm or farm supply) and the flowers of your choice. Tiles can be broken or complete. The sizes can vary.

The cluster garden is a colorful showcase for bright red geraniums

and white periwinkle in a sunny location. You will need one large clay drainage tile (12 inch diameter), 12 red geraniums, six white periwinkles, container soil (a good mix is one half peat moss or bark mixed with one-half vermiculite or perlite), white pebbles or gravel.

EMBED YOUR tiles securely into the ground at various levels with the largest tile in the back and the smaller ones in front. Fill each tile to within three to four inches of the top with container soil. Plant your

geraniums and periwinkle in a pleasing mix of red and white. Use white pebbles or gravel to set off your Towers of Flowers and water each tile thoroughly.

You can use tiles as free standing planters on your patio, line them up to create floral divider "fences," edge your rock garden, put them in your lily pond, cluster them for a unique herb garden... fit the ideas to your yard and garden.

Keep your tile Towers of Flowers well watered. Plants dry out more

down to earth Alice Burlingame

quickly when planted in this fashion than they do in the garden. Add plant food to water periodically according to directions.

If ideals seem futile, if friends disappoint me, if my heart is sad, or my mind in turmoil, if my eyes are dull and my body sluggish, I can go into my garden and find faith, tranquility, comfort and physical exercise, all

of which gives me a feeling of well-being.

Alice Wessels Burlingame has degrees in horticulture and landscape architecture from Michigan State University. She is considered a pioneer in horticultural therapy and has been writing "Down to Earth" since 1949.

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