

Container Gardens for Fall and Winter Indoor Growing



Indoor container gardens are the perfect way to extend the growing season for some of your favorite edible herbs and greens. Now is the time to begin planning or planting a container garden that can be brought inside before the first frost. Recently, I planted a couple of small gardens that I plan to carry into the house. Right now it is 100 degrees in the shade and plenty humid but planning ahead for the fall growing season is a must.

What to Plant in a Container Garden

I have a handful of favorite herbs that I like to have growing fresh all year long. The rest of my herb container gardens spend the winter on our unheated glassed in porch. There, they are protected from the harshest of conditions, yet still go

into a dormant, restful time. As the weather starts to cool to near freezing, I either carry the whole container inside or split the plant and bring small pots of certain larger herbs plants inside for winter. This has worked well for me the last few years. If I need a few mint leaves I can open the porch door and grab a few from the sleeping plant. No new leaves are being produced but I can still use the ones that are there.

Planting Decorative Container Gardens

The first garden I put together doesn't contain any edible plants. I actually was shopping at one of my favorite local garden centers and they had small terrarium or mini garden plants on sale. My collection of garden miniatures now being covered by the overgrown herb garden could be add to a new dish garden. My collection of enamel ware from flea market sales and would be a perfect basin to use for the garden. I purchased a few plants. When I got home, I decide to add my bonsai tree to the garden too. It adds some height to the landscape.

Gather the Supplies

The first step to the mini container garden construction is to gather the items for the garden.



In this container garden I used miniature terrarium or houseplants. It serves the purpose of a creative little garden that is fun to look at. My grandchildren love to find the miniature world hiding in the garden.



Place a layer of stone in the bottom of your container gardens for good drainage. Add the potting soil and I also added some perlite to the soil for extra air and drainage. Container gardens have the tendency to compact and become soggy. Adding the perlite will keep the soil from clumping together.



Planting the Garden

I planted the tiny plants around the basin. I left the bonsai tree planted in it's own pot. If it doesn't do well as part of the garden, I can pull it out and move it to a better location. I am actually so surprised that I have kept this tree alive for three years.



The Finishing Touches

Once I had the plants where I liked them, I took a sheet of moss that I purchased at the garden center. Soak the moss and then pull pieces of it and arrange around the garden. Not only does it look pretty, it serves to keep moisture in the soil longer.



Finally, the real fun begins. Place your decorations and miniatures around their garden world. I prefer to tuck mine into little vignettes.



Timber Creek Farm

I have always been a kid at heart and I hope I never lose that sense of fun and whimsy.



Planting an Indoor Herbal Food Garden

For a more usable style of container garden, plant culinary and medicinal herbs. The second container garden has five of my favorite herbs to use during the winter.

Thyme— for colds, and respiratory infections, including cough suppression. Brew in a tea or make an infusion using vodka or coconut oil

Oregano— great immunity boosting herb. I use it in cooking mostly. You can use it fresh or dried. It's great to have on hand for any chickens or animals that get sick or sniffly during the winter too. Both Oregano and Thyme are good for supplementing immune systems, digestive tracts and respiratory systems.

Mint– A delicious herb to use in cooking, for flavor and garnish. Mint can be used for freshening and cleaning. Add some to a spray bottle of vinegar or vodka is a natural counter top cleaning spray. In the fall, mint spray will help deter pests from seeking shelter in your house as the nights get chilly.

Parsley – Used for flavor in many recipes. Also used as a garnish on food. The leaves are full of nutrition and Parsley is a good green to take to the chickens when they need some fresh greens.

Lavender– Mostly I plant Lavender because I love Lavender. It grows well in pots with other herbs, When it flowers I snip off the stem and dry the stalk to add to my wool storage. Lavender repels pests and insects that might hide in my yarn inventory and damage the skeins of yarn. Add Lavender to sugar for a different flavor. It is delicious added to baked goods, too.

You can learn more about many herbs and their properties for health and healing in this post with printable charts.



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Of course I had to add some miniature vignette scenes to this container garden too. This is going to be my indoor herb garden this winter, while the majority of my fresh herbs will be allowed to go dormant or die out during the winter. These two container gardens are ready to come inside when ever the frost date gets near. Until then they will stay outside, enjoying the late summer sun and humidity.

Watering Container Gardens

I find the watering the hardest part of growing in container gardens. When the weather is hot and the garden is sitting in the sun, the container dries out much faster than I would expect. When inside, where the heat and humidity are easier to control, the gardens seem to need much less water.

Of course this is what you would expect but how do you know when to water? I use the good old fashioned method of sticking my finger a few inches into the soil. If it feels dry, I water the garden! If it feels moist I might spray with a spray bottle. Roots can rot in improperly drained soil, so try not to over water and end up with soggy soil. If possible, set the garden in the sun to dry and do not water until the soil feels dry again. It is a bit of a game trying to get the watering amount just right.

What do you grow indoors in container gardens during the winter?

