



SUSTAINABILITY

*Learn to live
lightly by
focussing on
Sustainability
and knowing
more about your
place*

Activity overview

Grow a tomato plant in a hanging container made from recycled bits

Equipment required

Large plastic bottle
String
Aluminium foil or paper
Soil or potting mix
Tomato plant
(you can grow one from any tomato!)

Hammer
Nail
Sharp knife/scissors
Marker pen

Time required

About an hour

BUILD AN UPSIDE DOWN TOMATO PLANTER

Grow your own veggies using recycled materials. You don't even need a garden to do this one – you can hang them in a window sill, from a fence, or off the verandah.

1. Wash out your large (2L) plastic bottle
2. Use a marker pen to draw a line around the bottle about 6cm from the bottom.
 - a. An easy way to do this is to lay your marker pen on a low surface (such as a few books) that is about 5cm tall
 - b. Stand the bottle next to the marker so that the marker is touching the bottle
 - c. Now, keeping the bottle standing, rotate the bottle against the marker so that you get a line around the bottle.



3. You may need some help with this part as you need to cut the bottle along the line you drew. Use a sharp craft knife or scissors to cut the bottle along the line you drew.



4. The part you cut off the bottle will be put back into the bottle upside down. Try it out. Does it fit OK? Hold the bottle so that it is upside down. This will be a hanging container and you just made the top of the container. The part you cut off is now the funnel for water.

5. You need to put some holes in the bottle so you can hang it up with your string (or wire or fishing line). The best place for the holes is about 1cm below the edge where you cut the bottle. Use the hammer and nail to make the holes. How many holes will you need? Use your marker pen to mark how far the funnel goes into the bottle (you know, the bit of the bottle you cut off). This will be the mark to show how much soil to put in later. When you have done this, take the funnel part out again.

6. You need to put some holes in the funnel part using your hammer and nail. You need enough holes to let water run through. Try it out. Do you need more holes or is the water running through like a little shower?

7. Pick up the big part of the bottle. You need to put some aluminium foil or paper in so that it blocks light from the soil and the roots of the tomato plant. Put the foil or paper around the edge. Will you put it on the inside or the outside? Which would work best? You decide!

This information is not for sale. It is for educational purposes only.

Contact us: Breathing_Space@maroonoec.eq.edu.au



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BUILD AN UPSIDE DOWN TOMATO PLANTER (CONT.)

8. Gently pick up your little tomato plant. Be careful to keep the soil around the roots. You need to gently trim off the bottom few leaves. You can pinch them off with your finger nails.

9. Now carefully tuck the leaves together and push the top of the plant up through the cut end of the bottle and through the neck so that the leaves start to poke out of the lid end of the bottle. Gently get the leaves out through the neck of the bottle so that the roots stay in the bottle and the leaves and stem are out.

10. Holding the bottle with the neck down (and the tomato plant upside down), fill the bottle with soil or potting mix up to the mark you made and gently tamp (push) it down.

11. Give your plant some water to settle the soil. How much water will your plant need?

12. Put the funnel part back in and line up the holes. Using your string or wire or fishing line, make a hanger. How long should the hanger be? Maybe you should have a look at where you'd like to hang your tomato plant to give you an idea of how long the hanger should be.

You are now ready to hang up your plant.

Congratulations!

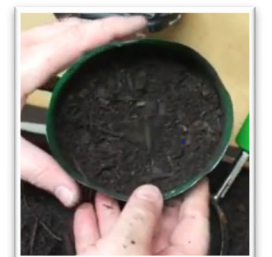
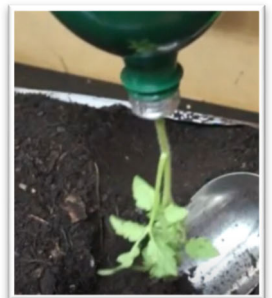
(Remember to water your plant each day so that the soil is moist but not wet)

What now?

Hmm, what else would you like to know? What about being a scientist and ask questions like;

- How long will it take for the tomato plant to grow flowers or tomatoes?
- How much does the tomato plant grow each day?
- What is the best place to grow the tomato?
- What other questions could you ask?

What would you need to do to answer these questions? Do you need to record your observations each day? How will you present your findings (a chart, a PowerPoint)? With whom will you share your findings; friends, family, teachers?



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQNYqyKURK8>

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