



**Gardening in containers allows you to create beautiful green spaces anywhere!
Here are some tips for choosing the right container.**



Terra Cotta or Unglazed Clay

- Relatively inexpensive and widely available
- Porous, bringing more air to roots but dries out quickly
- Heavier, less prone to tipping over if plant is top heavy
- Weight can make them more difficult to move
- Breaks easily, not frost proof, need winter storage

Glazed Ceramic

- More expensive than unglazed terra cotta or clay
- Attractive shiny surface, many color choices
- Non-porous, retains more moisture
- Heavier, less prone to tipping over if plant is top heavy
- Weight can make them more difficult to move
- Breaks easily, some frost proof, needs winter storage

Plastic

- Inexpensive
- Available in many shapes and colors
- Non-porous, retains moisture
- Lightweight, easier to move
- Prone to tipping over if plant is top heavy
- Durable, especially if UV treated
- May not be frost proof and require winter storage



Fiberglass, Poly-Resin, Rubber, Foam

- Less expensive than the materials they resemble
- Often molded and colored to look like real stone, terra cotta, ceramic materials
- Non-porous, retains moisture
- Weight depends on material: fiberglass is quite heavy, while foam is extremely lightweight
- Usually durable and easy to move
- Usually frost proof

Stone (Molded from Stone Powder & Adhesives)

- Can be expensive
- Natural colors, available in many shapes and finishes
- Non-porous, retains moisture
- Heavy, less prone to tipping over if plant is top heavy
- Weight can make them more difficult to move
- Can break, not frost proof, needs winter storage

Concrete/Cement

- Expensive
- Grey color, sometimes stained other colors
- Non-porous, retains moisture
- Heavy, less prone to tipping over if plant is top heavy
- Weight can make them more difficult to move
- Durable, often frost proof

Hypertufa

- Created by combining various aggregates (sphagnum moss or coconut coir, sand, perlite/vermiculite) with Portland cement
- Expensive, can be made at home as a DIY project
- Can be molded into a variety of shapes
- Grey color, with a rough, rustic look
- Semi-porous, allows some draining of moisture
- Heavy, less prone to tipping over if plant is top heavy
- Weight can make them more difficult to move
- Durable, often frost proof



Wood

- Cost varies, depending on type
- Can be natural, stained, or painted
- Semi-porous
- Can rot and wear out with use and water exposure
- Cedar and redwood more water resistant
- Weight variable with type and size
- Avoid wood treated with creosote, arsenic, and other toxic chemicals

Metal

- Cost varies, depending on type
- Can be painted or allowed to develop rust/patina
- Non-porous, retains moisture
- Weight variable with type and size
 - Tin/aluminum prone to tipping over if plant is top heavy
 - Steel/cast iron more stable
- Durable, but can dent or rust easily, depending on material
- Best used with a liner to separate roots from rusty or sun-heated metal
- Not for winter use in cold climates

Plastic or Treated-Cloth Bags

- Generally inexpensive
- Non-porous, but can dry out quickly in sun or hot weather
- Lightweight, easier to move
- Prone to tipping over if plant is top heavy
- Plastic degrades in the sun, single season use
- Treated cloth can be cleaned and reused

Wire Frame with Coir (Shredded Coconut Husk)

- Moderate cost
- Porous, needs frequent watering
- Lightweight, easier to move
- Birds may pull apart coir to use as nesting material
- Coir degrades, wears out with use
- Best used with a liner to retain moisture and soil



Baskets

- Generally inexpensive
- Woven wood, bamboo, wicker, straw, etc.
- Porous, needs frequent watering
- Lightweight, easier to move
- Prone to tipping over if plant is top heavy
- Best used with a liner to retain moisture and soil
- Not for winter use in cold climates

Novelty

- Can be anything that will hold potting mix
- Best used in ways that bring variety and whimsy to the garden
- Examples include pumpkins, watering cans, boots, wagons, wheelbarrows, old sinks...

Raised Bed/Window Box

- Variable cost
- Raised above ground level, ergonomic, reduces back/knee strain
- May create focal point in the landscape
- Irrigation systems, trellises, and pest screening can be added

Earth Box ® & Similar

- Containerized gardening system developed by commercial farmers
- Can be expensive, sold as a kit
- Maintenance-free, portable, and self-watering
- Doubles the yield of conventional gardening
- Allows control of soil conditions
- Can become top heavy as plants grow larger