

# BUILD YOUR OWN TERRARIUM!

Terrariums are mini gardens in sealable containers that create a mostly self-sustaining ecosystem. Making them is an easy, fun, low cost (or no cost) way to reuse clear containers for gifts or your own decor.

## TERRARIUM LAYERS

**HARDSCAPE & PLANTS:** These are larger stones, wood pieces, and interesting things found while foraging. Moss and plants are used to fill in the space around these elements.

**SUBSTRATE:** This is soil! Put at least one to two inches of soil to accommodate the roots of your plants. You want to leave vertical room for the hardscape above.

**SEPARATION MESH:** This separates the false bottom from the substrate above, allowing for proper drainage.

**FALSE BOTTOM:** This is the bottom layer of the terrarium and should consist of small rocks that create room for water. This should be about an inch to an inch and a half in height.



## GUIDE

- Find a clear glass container with a lid to house your terrarium (cleaned pasta jars, thrift store mason jars, etc.). Clean out jar thoroughly.
- Forage for supplies in your own yard or with permission on someone else's property! Don't forage on public lands. Look for small rocks for the false bottom; larger rocks, twigs, and acorn caps for accents; soil that's rich and crumbly; something for the separation mesh; and moss and other moisture-loving plants. Only take pieces of plants if possible so nature can grow back! There may be microfauna like worms and pill bugs living in the soil – that's totally ok since they're beneficial to your terrarium.
- The separation mesh can be a grocery store potato bag, garden netting, or plastic bag that many small holes are poked into to allow water into the false bottom.
- Construct the terrarium layers as shown in the image from bottom to top and give it a little water. Be careful to keep the water level below the mesh to avoid root rot.
- Water when you feel the terrarium is getting dry and water droplets are no longer visible on the inside of the glass. For a closed terrarium, you should wait a month between waterings and keep the lid open for 24 hours once a week. It's common for some plants to die before adapting to the conditions, don't lose hope and keep trying.
- We hope this has made your home or workplace a happier place. To help create even more happy places, give to Southface Institute at [southface.com/donate](https://southface.com/donate) or text SOUTHFACE to 44321.