

# Urban Gardening Container Ideas – Start a Garden in the City!

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## Urban Gardening Container Ideas

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Growing a garden is a great way of supplementing food stores with something that can be sustainable year after year. Not only will you be providing healthy food options for your family but you will also be learning to pay attention to your environment while learning a skill that has been keeping people alive for eons! Just a few great urban gardening container ideas will get you started!

Where and what you grow will vary greatly upon the region you live in but also the exact setup of your residence. If all you have is an apartment, you may only have a couple of windows or a balcony if you are lucky. If you are in a slightly more open area you may have a patio or small yard. Either way, container gardening is about maximizing your use of space.

There are urban gardening container ideas for everyone.



## Small Space Gardens

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Don't overlook the tried and true window box garden! Size will be your enemy but you can grow an amazing amount in a small space if you provide good soil and proper care. Any small container that is at least 5" deep will provide you the ability to grow food.

Cut off pop bottles, old soup cans, small flower pots, and even old rubber boots make great pots! The trick is knowing what to grow.

For pots that are very small, less than 6" deep, you can grow a variety of small vegetables and pretty much any herb. Just remember to provide drainage for excess water. Try growing lettuce and other salad greens, radishes, green onions, and garlic.

The mighty #10 can is a great option for a midsized planter. Poke a few holes in the bottom for drainage and put in a good compost mix and you are off! It's amazing what you can grow in a #10, bush beans, pearl onions, peas, carrots, chard, peppers, and spinach or add a small lattice and try tomatoes and pole beans.

Pots greater than a foot in depth will be about the maximum that most people will be able to handle in a window garden. These pots open up the world of cole crops like cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, kale and brussels sprouts in addition to potatoes, yams, sweet potatoes, okra, beets, and squash.

Small usually means limitations and though you are limited there is a great diversity in what you can grow. Because of soil mass, soil quality is vital and ensuring enough water and nutrients will be the primary concern. Also be mindful that not all crops grow well together.

*Avoid* planting these crops together:

Beans with onions and garlic

Tomatoes or squash with potatoes

Onions with beans and peas



## Medium Space Gardens

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If you have a sizable balcony, front porch, or back patio you have numerous options on what to grow and can provide a large portion of the vegetable needs of a small family. You can always use the small pot options and plant more density or use larger pots to increase your options.

Your options for larger containers are as plentiful as small containers. Premanufactured planters are a good option for a less conspicuous look but you can always add things like steel tubs, DIY wooden boxes, tires, or cut off plastic drums.

With the added soil mass, you now have the ability to grow most vegetables and some fruits. All of your berry bushes are available at soil depths of 12" just watch blueberries as they need very specific conditions but blackberries, strawberries, melons, eggplant, and pumpkin will grow well.

In containers greater than 12" deep and with decent amounts of soil the staple crops of corn and beans can be easily grown. Potatoes are a good option for containers with enough room for them to grow and without the hard packed ground in most fields, they will be easy to harvest.

In addition to those listed above, *don't* combine:

Blueberries with other crops

Potatoes with tomatoes, pumpkins, squash, radishes or cucumbers

Beans with beets

Additional Reading: [Greenhouse Growing Month by Month – A Complete Greenhouse Growing Schedule](#)



## Large Space Gardens

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If you have a sizable yard, you can produce anything a large farm does just in limited amounts. Depending on your arrangement, having adequate sun may be your biggest issue. Plant in the ground if you choose but some zoning may limit your ability to grow crops. Read over any zoning laws as containers are often overlooked.

If you choose a container, the raised bed is king! Generally a 4' x 8' wooden frame between 12" and 18" deep allows you to grow a larger variety and decent quantity. With a few of these, you can provide most if not all of your vegetable needs. A raised bed planted with just corn can yield between 80 and 100 ears of corn a year.

Larger pots, those measuring 2' across by 20" deep can support large berry bushes and even some dwarf fruit tree varieties. Add a trellis to grow grapes. Lemon trees are surprisingly easy to grow in pots this size.

Smaller crops like those listed above can be grown in lengths of gutter attached to a privacy fence or the back wall of a home for a cheap DIY option. These work great for salad greens and cole crops that are often victimized by small animals. With a drip irrigation system and

some cleverly placed holes, you can water the whole garden easily with drip irrigation.

I am sure everyone can come up with their own urban container gardening ideas and with just a little guidance, produce some crops no matter how little space is available. As long as you use a nutrient-rich soil, provide plenty of water, and place them where there is plentiful sun, your crops should thrive no matter what container you choose. I know a man who grows flowers in a discarded toilet if you can do that you can do anything.

Do you have any urban gardening container ideas that you'd like to share? Let everyone know in the comments below.

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