

Novelty Containers for Growing Plants

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Abstract

Currently, the human population is rapidly concentrating in urban areas and green infrastructure is becoming important for societal sustainability. As per the studies conducted by NASA, 15-18 plants are recommended in 6–8-inch diameter container to clean the air in an average 1,800 sq feet house (approximately, one plant for 100 sq. meter). For that, adding plants in indoor space by using novelty containers is one of the most easy and aesthetic way. Indoor scaping is the art of designing, installing and caring for plants in an enclosed environment. It creates an overall pleasing environment by using natural colors, ornamental plants, sculptures, focal points etc. in different ways. One can get a simple look to a high-tech look or a natural look to an elegant look by using them. A plant which has common appeal can take an entirely new looks by using unique or novelty planters.

When buying a container, there are many things to consider like shape, size, and drainage, color etc. because it can determine how healthy or unhealthy the plant will grow. The choices in variety of planter construction and surfaces are wide, as is the price range for these containers. Commonly used pot's materials are plastic, ceramic, terra cotta, wood and metal. There are endless ways to use containers in indoor scaping such as table planter, wall planters, hanging pots, terrariums etc.

Different ways to use containers

1. Hanging:

Hanging planters are available in plastic, fiberglass, wood, metal, ceramic, basket weave and wire frame for natural mossed display. Hangers can be sealed, placed in drainage trays or self-watering just like floor planters. They can be suspended by decorative chain, jute, and wire or fish line for an invisible suspended look.



2. Floor Planter:

Floor planters are available in cylinders (short and tall), squares, rectangles, half rounds, triangular and hexangular shapes. The most common planters are cylindrical.



3. Table Planter:

These are planters which are placed on tables, counters, sills, ledges or any surface above the floor. They are usually shorter and generally available in the same colors, styles and varieties as the floor planters.



4. Wall Planter:

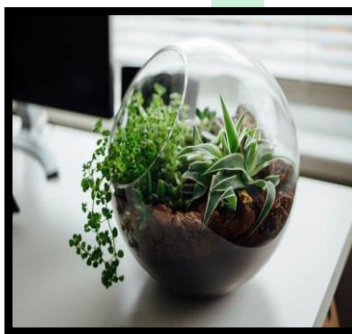
These planters mount directly onto wall surfaces and commonly are flat on one side. They are available in colors and styles to match floor and table planters. Custom Planters: Permanent planting containers can be constructed as a part of the interior structure itself for

natural incorporation of interior landscape design. The cost is of course a consideration, but the results are very pleasing.



5. Terrariums:

Terrariums are gardens displayed in glass domes, bowls, aquarium tanks and other clear glass or plastic containers which hold soil. These can be enclosed or open and create an environment which is partially self-sustaining and moisture retentive. These displays can be very interesting, but do require general knowledge of care.



Points to consider while selecting a Container

Choosing the right container for plants is very important. There are many types and styles of containers are available for indoor display. Size, shape and drainage are critical factors in the selection of the container that will provide the best environment for growth of plants.

- 1. Size:** For free-standing and table plants, the size of the planter should be proportionate to plant size, allowing ample room for root systems. Some plants prefer to be root-bound, so it is important not to transplant these plants into containers that are too large. The container should always have sufficient room for planting and a reasonable depth for the growing medium. A minimum depth of four inches at the edges is recommended. Sizes of plants are usually given by the diameter of the greenhouse pots, in which they are planted.

Table 1: Selection of container based on size of the plant

Sr. No.	Size of the plant	Container size
1	Small annual plants (3-8 inches tall)	4 inches
2	Medium annual plants (9-18 inches tall)	6 inches
3	Large annual plants (> 18 inches tall)	8 inches
4	Small perennial plants (3-10 inches tall)	8 inches
5	Large perennial plants (> 10 inches tall)	10 inches

- 2. Shape:** Most greenhouse pots are cylindrical. Some taper from a wider top rim to a narrower base. Containers with narrow mouths should be avoided, as this gives little width at the rim and can be difficult to plant. The shape of the outer decorative planter is less important to the growth needs of the plant, and should be chosen for their aesthetic value. Decorative planters are available in many shapes.
- 3. Drainage:** The most important consideration when planting in containers is providing for drainage of the excess water from watering the plant. Water must not be allowed to stand in the soil around roots. This encourages root rot and decay. To avoid standing water try one of these two options.
- The greenhouse pots may be dropped into a decorative planter for display, without planting directly into the decorative container. This is actually a good option, because water is allowed to drain through the greenhouse pot with each watering, and excess water enters the outside decorative planter, which may also have a water tray to prevent drainage water build-up. If water is not allowed to drain freely from the soil, the roots will become water-logged. If the outer decorative container does not have a drainage tray and water collects within this container, the water must be emptied out or it will reenter the inner pot and soil as the water level rises.
 - Plants may be planted directly into decorative containers which provide for drainage of excess water. When planting directly into containers with no means of drainage, it is necessary to be extremely careful and only provide enough water to moisten the soil evenly. This will prevent build-up of water in the planter. Decorative planters are either sealed or have bottom trays which collect excess water through the holes at the bottom.

**Sealed Planters:**

It is recommended that inner pots be used when displaying plants in sealed decorative containers. If plants are planted directly into sealed units, there is no escape for excess water. Water may build-up in the soil and may encourage fungal root rot and decay, damaging or even killing the plant. A common idea and practice for plant growers has been to put gravel or sand at the bottom of sealed planters, to provide a pocket for drainage to accumulate. This is not an effective approach to proper drainage and aeration, as stagnation and rotting is not avoided.

Water Tray Planters:

Many planters available to the homeowner have built-in water trays which catch excess water. Plants may be planted directly into these containers or greenhouse pots may be dropped into them. These planters are effective in providing an outlet for drainage, but care should be taken not to overwater as the trays can overflow and cause damage to surfaces.

Indoor plants suitable for container gardening

Plants are a fantastic way to liven up our surroundings and add a touch of freshness to any space. Besides uplifting the aesthetic appearance of home, plants also help to purify the air and make a beatific addition to an urban home. So here is a list of easy-to-maintain, beautiful indoor plants suitable for indoor container gardening in India.

E.g. Golden pothos, English ivy, Areca palm, ZZ plant, Spider plant, Fiddle leaf fig, Peace lily, Snake plant, Ferns, Monstera, Croton

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