

MUCH TO DO ABOUT GARDENING WITH YOUTH

Youth Gardening Tips and Ideas: Teach Youth About Repurposing, Creativity and Thriftiness

- ❖ **Disposable diapers for moisture control.** Cut elastic edges off diapers, lay side-by-side with absorbent-side up in potting soil of pot then plant your plant. Cover roots with potting soil. Water as normal and diaper will retain moisture; keep plants hydrated.
- ❖ **Coffee grounds for stronger plants.** Sprinkle grounds when sowing tiny seeds. Grounds keep root maggots and pests at bay and repel snails and slugs but attract earthworms. High in nitrogen and amend texture and fertility of soil. Look for organic beans – no insecticide – better coffee for your health and gardens.
- ❖ **Homemade Seed Tape** for tiny seeds, such as carrots and radishes. Each strip of biodegradable tape is embedded with already spaced seeds – just plant the strip. Mist a strip of double-ply toilet paper with water. Space the seeds in center of tape strip, let dry and gently roll paper back up. Bring seed tape into garden and roll out your paper where you want plants.
- ❖ **Planting roses in potatoes.** To start rose bush from cutting, take 8-9 inch cutting of new growth from rose bush. Cut stem at 45-degree angle. Remove all dead and unhealthy leaves from stem. Dip freshly cut stem into rooting hormone and set aside. Plant the potato and rose cutting about 4 inches into pot or ground. Potato will supply nutrients and moisture to the cutting.
- ❖ **Recycled bell jar.** Protect your seedlings from early spring frosts with old gallon milk jug. Cut off bottom of container, place jug over plant that needs protection. Leave cap off for airflow. Wash well first!
- ❖ **Herb Gardens in re-purposed old wooden boxes.** Garage sales, antique stores, wine stores and flea markets sometimes have old crates, toolboxes, drawers. Clean the containers and drill drainage holes in bottoms. Fill them with soil and plant the herbs for a re-purposed, portable herb garden.
- ❖ **Toilet paper roll seedling starters.** Take empty toilet paper roll; cut three 1-inch slits evenly around bottom. Then fold ends flat, closing the bottom of roll. Fill with potting soil and plant the seeds. Put seedling starters on plastic tray with sides a few inches deep to keep them upright. When seeds sprout, place plant (in cardboard roll) into the soil. Cardboard will degrade in soil as plant grows.
- ❖ **Coffee filter liners.** Line bottom of plant pots with used coffee filters to keep potting soil from falling out of hole and keep moisture in. Coffee filters will biodegrade over time.
- ❖ **Sticky tape aphid wipes.** Use roll of 2-inch packaging or duct tape. Wrap tape around middle of both hands with sticky side out. Run your hands up and down the stem and back of leaves gently to remove aphids.



Until next thyme, enjoy coaching and guiding youth in the garden.

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