



Gardening Indoors With Your Child

Potato Plants

Collect one or two potatoes—try a baking potato and a sweet potato. Cut each potato in half. Let your child help you sprout each potato half by carefully poking several toothpicks around the perimeter. Place each potato half in a glass so the toothpicks rest on the rim. Fill each glass with enough water to cover the bottom of each potato half. Let your child add water to keep the ends submerged as necessary. Encourage your child to keep a record of his or her plants' growth. When the potatoes have sprouted, plant them in pots of dirt. The plants grow big very quickly.



Rock Garden

Save a plastic or metal lid from a wide-mouthed jar (the lid from a peanut butter or mayonnaise jar works well). Take your child for a walk to collect enough small, pretty rocks to cover the inside of the jar lid. Have your child rinse and dry the rocks before gluing them in the jar lid (a hot glue gun works best). After the glue has dried, let your child "water" his or her rock garden. What happens to the colors of the rocks when they are watered? Will the rocks in the garden grow? Why or why not?

Plastic Bottle Terrarium

To make a terrarium, cut the top half from an empty 2-liter plastic bottle (recycle or reuse the bottom half). Leaving the cap on, set the bottle in an aluminum pie pan and glue the perimeter of the bottle to the pan (a hot glue gun works well). Let the glue dry. Remove the cap from the bottle and help your child use a funnel to pour in some dirt. Have your child drop in two or three seeds and use the funnel again to add enough dirt to cover them lightly. Let your child add a small amount of water to the terrarium and replace the cap. Place the terrarium in a sunny place. After several days, point out to your child how the terrarium is "watering" itself.

