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5 Ideas for Simple DIY Vertical Gardens in Small Spaces

Don't waste your money on an expensive prefabricated structure.

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Making the most of vertical space is a key strategy for small space gardens. A vertical garden structure is one option to do so. These are structures that allow plants to be grown in pots or planting pockets on a wall or fence, rather than in raised beds or in the ground.

Vertical gardens, however, can be expensive if you buy them and challenging to maintain. Before considering a vertical garden of this type, it is important to remember that there are other options—such as [growing espaliered](#) or cordon fruit trees against a wall or fence, or [growing climbers](#) up a trellis, for example.

If you do decide to opt for a vertical garden structure, there are a few basics to remember:

- Think about sunlight and shade, positioning a vertical garden to provide the right light levels for the plants you wish to grow.
- Consider water, as a key issue with vertical gardens is keeping plants hydrated. In south-facing vertical gardens in the Northern Hemisphere, this can be a particular challenge. So, be sure to think about watering and how water will be delivered to the plants. Consider integrated irrigation solutions to keep time and effort required to maintain the system to a minimum.
- Make sure you know the [root types](#) of different plants. Deeper rooted plants won't typically thrive in a garden of this type. Choose plants with shallower roots that can cope in smaller planting pockets or containers.

DIY Vertical Gardens

Fortunately, there are plenty of reasonably cheap solutions if you want to create your own vertical garden structure. The key is to make one using reclaimed or upcycled materials.

There are a wide range of options, but some may not be the best solution for your area and your particular garden. Be sure to consider the environmental conditions where you live before designing a system of this kind.

To help you begin to seek out the right solution, here are five examples of relatively simple vertical garden structures that you might create.



1. Simple Shelving Vertical Garden

One of the easiest ways to grow more plants in limited space is to add some shelving on which you grow a range of herbs, leafy greens, flowers, or plants like strawberries in pots.

You might make a shelving-type solution from old wood pallets or other reclaimed timber. You might simply upcycle some old shelving from around your home. You might even use natural branches from your garden to create a shelving structure.



If you want to go one stage further, you can close in the front of the shelves to a certain level in order to create a series of planting areas like window boxes. Line these and fill them with your growing medium. This will give you even more growing space.

You might even be able to incorporate irrigation into your design. Have a pipe running down through the shelving unit and a perforated pipe running slightly downwards through each of the growing areas.

2. Bamboo Pipe Vertical Garden

Another idea is to make a structure from sections of bamboo pipe, through which water can flow from the top to the bottom. Holes in the tops of bamboo pipes, placed on a slight angle downward across a wall or fence, allow you to place plants in pots.

Wicks can go from each of these pots into the pipe below. Water can be poured in or directed into the top of such a system and flow down through to the base. The wicks will transmit water (and nutrients from [liquid plant feeds](#)) to the growing medium in the pots, and to the plant roots.

3. Planting Pocket Vertical Garden

Another idea is to sew a vertical garden from reclaimed material, creating a series of planting pockets in which individual plants can be grown.

If you are clever, you could also incorporate wicks, drip irrigation, or other watering solutions within the design, to make it easier to keep plants within each pocket hydrated.

4. Bottle Tower Vertical Garden



You might also make a vertical garden using household waste that would otherwise be sent for recycling. For example, there are a number of ways to stack plastic bottles with growing medium and planting holes so that they create planting towers held against a wall or fence.

Water can be poured in the top of these towers and will trickle down through the system to keep plants hydrated.

5. Hanging Planter Vertical Garden

One final idea involves hanging containers from hooks or canes from a wall, fence, or trellis structure. Hanging containers goes far beyond the traditional hanging basket. There is a wide range of reclaimed items you might use.



If you think about the basics above and use your imagination, you will discover just how many different vertical garden ideas there are. Just be sure to choose the right location, think about watering, select the right plants, and you should have no problem in creating a successful and abundant vertical garden for where you live.