

Horticulture Therapy Ideas

- * Begin a garden in a nursing home; interest the patients in caring for the plants.
- * Create water gardens in bottles or jars. This is an easy way to teach plant propagation and to share plant material at very little expense.
- * Teach the individuals to make terrariums or dish gardens in foil-lined boxes. Provide window boxes and materials for planting to enable the shut-in to experience the joy of gardening.
- * Giving, as well as receiving, is important to everyone. Help people with special needs grow gift plants, or vegetables, to share with friends.
- * Grow herbs, and then package them as gifts. This is a marvelous project for the visually impaired.
- * Make simple corsages. If the making of the corsage is beyond the ability of someone with arthritic hands, the patient can at least hold or wear the flowers and enjoy the beauty and fragrance.
- * Teach simple flower arranging.
- * Use dry petals from gift bouquets to make sachets and potpourri for gifts.
- * Make pomander balls of apples, oranges, lemons, cloves and orrisroot.
- * Press wildflowers or garden flowers and foliage for use on notepaper, Christmas cards, pictures or plaques.

- * Use discarded items as containers to teach methods of conservation and litter control.
- * Use dry corn husks in the summer and materials from nature to make dolls, flowers or wreaths for holidays.
- * Remember Arbor Day. Plant trees wherever possible with everyone's help.
- * Use windowsill greenhouses to teach horticulture from the germination of the seed to the repotting of the plants.
- * Try to organize garden clubs in special schools, state hospitals or retirement homes and help them with programs.
- * Set up window bird feeders and give unending joy and a feeling of being needed by letting a patient keep the supply of food replenished. This is also an excellent way to identify birds, especially if there is a small bird book at hand.
- * Enlist Junior Garden Club members, who usually enjoy making bird feeders for the elderly. Young patients will find satisfaction in making simple feeders and bird baths for their own enjoyment.