



Newton Le Willows Gardeners' Association

Bio-degradable seed pots

Instead of buying expensive peat or recycled fibre pots to plant your seeds in it is easy to make your own biodegradable pots. These can be made easily using old toilet rolls or old newspapers which can then be planted straight into the soil and the roots will just grow through them. This can be an effective way for plants that don't like having their roots disturbed if you want to start them off indoors. These work particularly well with peas, beans and sweet corn all of which benefit from deeper roots before planting out. They will need a firm tray to keep them upright.

Seed-Starting Pots from Newspapers

Take a sheet of newspaper and fold in half lengthwise twice to form a long, narrow strip, or if you want slightly deeper pots into thirds. Don't use shiny or coloured paper as it may contain heavy metals.

Lay a straight sided drinking glass on its side and roll the newspaper around the glass starting at one end. The glass is used only as a form to roll the paper. About 1/2 to 1/3 of the strip of paper should overlap the open end of the glass.

Push the ends of the paper into the open end of the glass. This step doesn't have to be neat and tidy; just push the overlapping newspaper into the glass then Pull the jar out of the newspaper pocket

Push the bottom of the jar into the newspaper pot, squashing the folded bottom to flatten. This step will seal the bottom of your pot. Once the pot has been filled with soil, the bottom will be secure. Pull the jar out and you have a finished paper pot. If necessary secure the loose end of the paper with tape.





Plant pots from toilet rolls

Save your toilet roll tubes in readiness for planting your seedlings. The inside of a toilet roll makes a great pot. Full size rolls are perfect for growing long rooted plants such as Sweet Peas or Runner Beans; stood upright in a tray filled with compost they provide better depth in a similar way to root trainers. For ordinary plants you can cut them in half and fill with general purpose compost and plant your seeds. You can then plant them straight into the garden when they are ready, as the cardboard will decompose naturally. It's much cheaper than buying seedling containers and causes less root disturbance.

If you want to seal one ends take a toilet roll tube and make four slits around one end of the tube to create 4 flaps each about 5cms in length. Fold in the four little flaps like a box bottom and stand upright on a tray. Fill the pots with potting compost press down firmly with your fingers and you will find that the compost will stay in the tube.

