

## Gardening with Kids: Creating a Living Easter Basket

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Getting your children or grandchildren involved in gardening can be a very rewarding experience, but where do you start? Connecting kids with the outdoors, getting exercise, and creating lifelong memories all go hand in hand when you spend time gardening with children. This project will provide quick rewards and produce a beautiful project that your children will be able to show off to friends and family.

### Supplies:

- Basket or container for planting
- Garbage bag
- Garden soil or potting mix
- Scissors
- Annual ryegrass seed (any fast growing grass seed)
- Spray bottle



Figure 1. A living Easter basket is a great project for kids.



Figure 2. Line the basket with plastic.

To begin, chose a container that you would like to make your “living Easter basket” out of and remember that containers that are shallow will work just fine. Place this on a steady surface and line the inside of the basket with your garbage bag, pushing the plastic into any corners (Figure 2).

Next, add your soil to the basket, leaving a small edge of the basket sticking up above or beyond the edge of the soil. Try to keep the soil fairly flat so that you can water easily (Figure 3).

To give the basket a clean, finished look, trim the plastic of the garbage bag so that it only sticks up about half an inch beyond the soil.



Figure 3. Fill with soil, trying not to mound.



Figure 4. Sprinkle grass seeds on the surface of the soil, do not cover.



Finally, liberally sprinkle your grass seed on the entire surface of the soil in the basket. It is okay to plant it very thick and this will help your basket to be more full (Figure 4). When you are finished, use a spray bottle to water the entire surface of the soil.

Place the basket near a sunny window or on a porch or balcony and have your child spray the seeds every few days to keep the moist.

Your basket should begin to germinate in 7-10 days and have a full appearance in 14 days. As the grass begins to grow, have your child “mow” their basket by trimming the grass with a pair of scissors. It is okay to take up to one third of the length of the grass off at a time, and this will help keep an even basket of grass.

Your green basket should continue to grow for as long as 60 days after planting. This green project is a great replacement for the synthetic plastic often used in baskets and a great learning opportunity for your children. Keep watering as long as you want to enjoy your living basket, and after the season has passed simply empty and save for next year’s gardening project!

