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2022

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Breathe new life into container gardens with ingenious ideas that customize, repurpose, and create one-of-a-kind pots.

POSH PLANTERS

Elevate the look of your patio with handsome wood structures or trendy farmhouse styles. Boost curb appeal with distinctive window boxes.

GARDEN TRELLISES

Train your favorite vining plants to reach for the sky with garden trellises you can make in a weekend.

GARDEN DECOR

Update your landscape with easy projects that boost the ambience of your front and back yards.

FROM THE EDITORS

YOU CAN DO IT!

The great outdoors offers many ways to showcase your creativity and inventiveness. Decorative trellises in the garden, colorful containers on the patio, and salvaged items transformed into obelisks or birdhouses can all personalize your yard.

The best part is you can create them yourself using ideas in this issue of *Easy Garden Projects* magazine. Turn everyday household products into innovative planters in "Upcycled Gardens," *page 16*. Or try the projects in "Modern Classics," *page 42,* to deliver an updated farmhouse vibe to your outdoor spaces.

There are projects for every style and skill level. Craft the ideas in "DIY Wood Trellises," *page 58,* in a weekend, while the head-turning wooden planters in "Wooden Wonders," *page 32,* take a little more time and preparation.

The most important thing is to make your projects your own. Take our ideas and put them to work in your home and backyard. Give them unique spins and have fun creating easy garden projects.

—The Editors

EASY GARDEN PROJECTS™

Better Homes & Gardens.

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POT LUCK

Affordable and adaptable, terra-cotta pots are outdoor dynamos. Explore our techniques for customizing these plain planters into eye-catching containers.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

Pebble tile sheets give these planters their rocky appearance. After prepping pots according to the instructions on *page 11,* use a utility knife to cut a sheet of large- or small-pebble mosaic tile to fit a tapered pot, cutting out and placing individual pebbles as needed to fully cover. Wearing waterproof gloves, spread construction adhesive lightly on half of the pot, press pebbles into place, and hold them for a few minutes until the adhesive sets. Repeat the process, covering the remainder of the pot with pebbles. Allow the adhesive to dry overnight. Use gloved fingers to push grout into the gaps between the pebbles. Wipe off excess grout. Let the grout dry for two hours, then use a damp sponge to wipe the pebbles until no grout haze remains. Rinse the sponge often in clean water for best results.

PERSONAL STYLE

Customize an ordinary terra-cotta pot with stencils. Use your house number, a monogram, or a favorite symbol. Prep the inside of the pot as outlined on *page 11* to keep the exterior paint from peeling; let dry. Spray-paint the pot's exterior and a few inches inside the rim; let dry. Apply spray adhesive to the back of stencils and position on pot. Mask area around stencils and spray-paint numbers using light coats, letting dry between coats, until desired coverage is achieved. Remove stencils.

BEFORE

BOOST CURB APPEAL

STENCIL A STUCCO FOSSIL

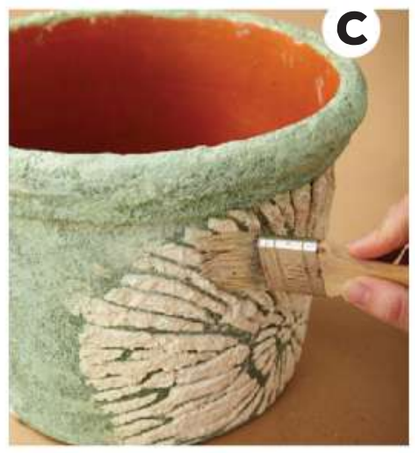
The stucco finish on this pot withstands weather and frequent watering. Using premixed stucco, a stencil, and paint, you can create a one-of-a-kind pot for your patio or garden.

PROJECTS + WORDS: OPPOSITE, ANDREA COOLEY; THIS PAGE, KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: JAY WILDE.

MATERIALS

- Terra-cotta pot
- Paintbrushes
- Outdoor spar urethane
- Spackling knife
- Premixed stucco
- Outdoor paint (We used DecoArt Patio Paint in green.)
- Fossil stencil
- Multisurface water-base sealant (We used Thompson's WaterSeal.)

STEP 1
Seal the inside of the terra-cotta pot, following the steps on *page 11*. Using a spackling knife, spread stucco on the outside of the pot (A) to create a rocklike finish that also seals the pot. (Primer/sealer is unnecessary for this project.) Let dry overnight. Brush on green paint or a color that contrasts with the stucco; let dry.



STEP 2
Place the fossil stencil on the pot and apply another layer of stucco (B), creating a design with a dimensional effect. Carefully lift the stencil off the pot; clean stencil immediately to preserve it for reuse.

STEP 3
After the stucco has dried, brush on sealant to preserve the finish (C). Winter pot indoors in freezing climates to protect it from weather-related damage.

TEXTURED TO PERFECTION

Lightweight pots take on more colorful personalities when decked out with a patchwork of driftwood bits (*at left*) or strips of dyed burlap (*at right*). Before beginning this project, refer to "How to Prep a Terra-Cotta Pot," *right*. To make burlap-covered pots, start by coloring strips of ivory burlap using tie-dye spray, available at crafts stores. Brush Outdoor Mod Podge on a small area of the pot and apply the burlap strips, overlapping edges and securing ends until pot is covered. Coat the burlap with Outdoor Mod Podge; let dry overnight. Spray the pot with polyurethane to finish sealing it. To make the driftwood pot, use watercolor paints to color the driftwood as desired, then attach them to the pot with construction adhesive.

PROJECTS + WORDS: KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: JAY WILDE.

HOW TO PREP A TERRA-COTTA POT

MATERIALS
- Terra-cotta pot
- Paintbrush
- Outdoor spar urethane
- Foam paintbrush
- Exterior primer/sealer

STEP 1
Sealing the inside and outside of a terra-cotta pot prevents it from absorbing moisture. Embellishments—including paint—also adhere better to a sealed pot. To seal the inside of a pot, brush on a coat of spar urethane (A); let dry overnight. Repeat, adding two more coats of sealant and letting pot dry between coats.

STEP 2
To seal the outside of the pot, brush on a coat of exterior primer/sealer (B); let dry. Primer/sealer, such as Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3, gives terra-cotta pots a white finish that works well with most of our embellishment projects.

TATTOO A POT

Small (4- to 5-inch-diameter) painted terra-cotta pots provide ideal canvases for simple yet bold decorations and fit beautifully on a windowsill. We made pot tattoos—or image transfers—from laser-printed copies of Mehndi-type drawings. Start by prepping the pot as outlined on *page 11*.

MATERIALS

- Terra-cotta pot
- Paintbrushes
- Exterior latex paint (black and white)
- Plaster of Paris
- Sanding block
- Laser-printed pattern
- Acrylic gel medium
- Spray spar urethane

STEP 1
Gather materials (A). Paint the pot's exterior black. Let dry.

STEP 2
Apply a coat of chalk paint (two parts white exterior latex paint plus one part Plaster of Paris) (B). Let dry. Use a sanding block to lightly distress the finish (C) and to reveal the undercoat.

STEP 3
Cut away excess paper from a laser-printed copy of your desired pattern. Apply acrylic gel medium on the pot where the image will transfer. Position the image facedown in the wet gel (D). Let dry 24–48 hours.

STEP 4
Soak the pot in a shallow tray of warm water with the paper submerged for 1–2 minutes (E). Rub off the paper, leaving the image transfer in place. Seal the pot with spray spar urethane to preserve the finish (F).

PROJECTS + WORDS: THIS PAGE, KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, ADAM ALBRIGHT; OPPOSITE, CAMERON SADEGHPOUR.

QUICK & EASY UPDATE

ALL IN THE DETAILS

Spice up a container by spray-painting it with a bright color. Let the paint dry. Then use a paint pen or a thin paintbrush and white exterior paint to draw rows of scallops to re-create this design. Once it's dry, seal the pot with spray spar urethane.

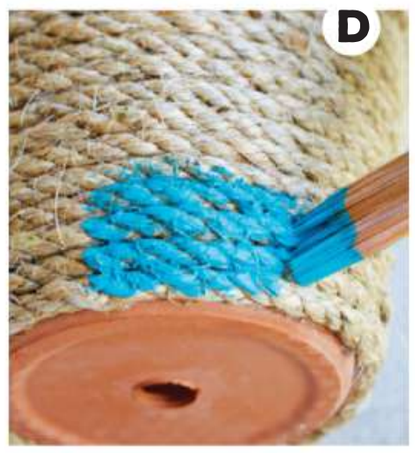
CREATIVE CONTAINERS

THAT'S A WRAP

Imbue your front porch with a casual beachy vibe with this container project. Start at the bottom of the pot and adhere rope with hot glue, slowly working your way up the pot. Once the glue has dried, paint the rope as desired. We chose to paint a turquoise blue strip in keeping with the bright seaside feel.

MATERIALS

- Flowerpot
- Rope or sisal twine
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Latex paint
- 1-inch paintbrush



STEP 1

Gather your supplies (A). We used a terra-cotta pot, but you could use this technique on any vessel—even a plastic nursery pot.

STEP 2

Place a 2-inch-long bead of glue along the bottom edge of the container (B). Quickly press the rope into the glue, holding it in place for a few seconds until the glue hardens slightly.

STEP 3

Continue the process as you move up the container, working in 2-inch segments to ensure the rope bonds to the pot as the glue dries. Place each layer of rope as close to the previous as possible, gluing the rope to both the pot and the previous layer (C).

STEP 4

Create a band of color by painting several rows of rope with latex paint (D). Let dry. Add a second coat of paint if necessary to achieve your desired look.

PROJECTS + WORDS: MEGAN HUGHES. PHOTOS: CAMERON SADEGHPOUR.

UPCYCLED GARDENS

Repurpose household materials and hardware store finds and give them new life as custom planters.

GALVANIZED PAIL

An 18-inch-diameter pail, *below,* provides plenty of room for root growth to keep plants growing strong throughout the summer. Use a drill with a step bit or cone bit to create a drainage hole, if your pail doesn't already have one. Then add color with exterior latex paint that complements the sunny planting scheme. At season's end, move ornamental maiden grass into the garden, where it will grow year after year. Use a rolling plant caddie with heavy-duty casters to make it easier to move hefty container gardens.

OH, NUTS

Add texture to plain containers with hex nuts, *opposite*. Lay a planter on its side and arrange hex nuts in a pattern, working in sections. Experiment with different sizes and shapes of nuts or washers. Spread a thin layer of glue over a small area and place hardware. Make sure to choose an adhesive that works outdoors and for the type of materials you're bonding. (We used Liquid Nails to bond metal to ceramic.) Once it is dry, spray-paint the entire planter for a chic monochromatic look.

BEFORE

PROJECTS + WORDS: RIGHT, ANDREA COOLEY; OPPOSITE, KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: RIGHT, JAY WILDE; OPPOSITE, ADAM ALBRIGHT.

BEFORE


RUST-OLEUM
PAINTER'S
2X
ULTRA COVER
PAINT + PRIMER
LIQUID NAILS
perfect GLUE

METAL TUB

Casters turn a galvanized tub into a garden on wheels, *left*. Tape off sections of the tub to paint. Prime and paint with indoor/outdoor spray paint. Let dry and remove tape. Flip over tub. Arrange four swivel casters, evenly spaced, around the perimeter of the tub bottom. Mark the holes, set aside casters, and drill. Attach casters with bolts and nuts. Drill additional holes for drainage.

SHOWER CADDY

Spray paint dresses up a shower caddy, *opposite,* to hold a colorful shade garden. A metallic satin-nickel finish coats the back frame while the baskets flaunt an avocado hue. Line the baskets with preserved moss to hold soil and plants while allowing excess water to drain away easily. Tuck the root balls of small shade-loving plants into each moss-lined pocket, adding enough soil to secure the plants. Water plants daily during hot weather.

BEFORE

PROJECTS + WORDS: LEFT, ANDREA COOLEY; OPPOSITE, KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: LEFT, JAY WILDE; OPPOSITE, ADAM ALBRIGHT..

BEFORE

CREATIVE CONTAINERS

BEFORE

STAINED BASKET

A large picnic basket, *opposite,* holds a garden fit for feasts—lettuce, bush tomato, basil, parsley, and edible flowers. Use a small brush and different colors of stain to create a plaid effect on the basket, then use a foam applicator to brush on a light coat of wood stain to unify and soften the colors. Before planting, line the basket with landscape fabric to hold the soil.

LIGHT FIXTURES

High-performance enamel forms a rust-preventive finish on metal light fixtures, *right.* Remove electrical parts, then brush on one coat of exterior primer and two coats of enamel, allowing time to dry between applications. Use paint pens to make patterns. Chinese evergreen and begonia enjoy a summer vacation outdoors in these fixtures.

PROJECTS + WORDS: KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: ADAM ALBRIGHT.

BEFORE

HERE'S THE SCOOP

At $10 each, galvanized metal feed scoops from a farm supply store, *this photo,* make affordable plant perches when mounted on the side of your home, shed, or fence. Drill or punch two holes in each scoop and secure it to a structure with screws or wire. Pots about 6 inches across fit nicely in the scoops.

UNIQUE CONTAINER GARDENS

Break the mold this season as you reimagine out-of-the-ordinary materials as clever, conversation-starting containers.

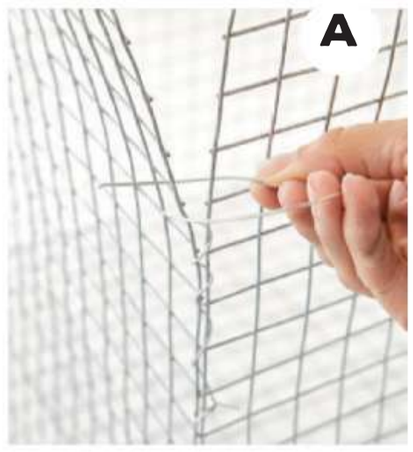
PROJECTS: JENI WRIGHT. WORDS: MARIA V. CHARBONNEAUX. PHOTOS: CARSON DOWNING & MARTY BALDWIN.

WIRE-MESH PLANTER

Rock, metal, and greenery strike a chord to create this large and in-charge planter, *above*. A shrub and wispy grasses contrast with the textural chipped slate and wire for an edgy look that's at home in a modern space. Pro tip: The finished planter is heavy, so construct it near where it will live.

MATERIALS

- Tape measure
- Large plastic or resin pot
- Tin snips
- Gloves
- 1-inch-square galvanized welded wire mesh
- 24-gauge steel galvanized wire
- Chipped slate (or other landscaping rock)
- Drill and bit



STEP 1
Measure the height of the pot. Using tin snips and wearing gloves, cut six wire-mesh squares that are 3 inches larger than the height of the pot.

STEP 2
Connect five of the mesh squares by wrapping wire around the edges to form a cube (A).

STEP 3
Add enough chipped slate to the mesh cube so the pot sits flush with the top (B). Drill several holes into the sides of the pot. Secure the pot to the cube by threading wire through the holes and around the mesh. Fill in with rock around the pot until the cube is full. Top the cube with the sixth mesh square, wrapping wire around all four edges to secure (C).

STEP 4
Using tin snips and wearing gloves, cut away the mesh over the pot. Fold the trimmed wire ends around the pot rim (D). Fill the pot with soil and plants.

DOWN THE PIPELINE

Showcase favorite water plants—and give soldering a try—with a plant stand constructed from copper pipe and fittings, *left*. Our design accommodates a 12-inch-diameter stainless-steel bowl found at a restaurant supply store, but you can customize the pipe lengths as needed. Left untreated, copper will change color when exposed to the elements. To keep it looking shiny and new, protect it with a sealant, such as Everbrite protective coating for metal.

MATERIALS

- 10-foot length of ½-inch copper pipe
- Pipe cutter
- Four ½-inch copper tee fittings
- Four 90-degree ½-inch copper elbows
- Four ½-inch copper caps
- Sandpaper
- Flux (lead-free soldering paste)
- Heavy-duty gloves
- Welding goggles
- MAPP torch kit
- Lead-free solder wire
- Rag
- 5-quart stainless-steel mixing bowl (12 inches in diameter)

STEP 1

Using a pipe cutter, cut ½-inch copper pipe into four 15½-inch lengths, four 7¾-inch lengths, and four 3-inch lengths. Dry-fit the pieces to form a stand: Arrange the medium lengths and tee fittings to form a square base, extend the base assembly at each corner with the short lengths and elbows, and complete with the long lengths and caps as legs.

STEP 2

To solder each joint, sand the inside of the fitting and the outer end of the connecting pipe. Brush flux on both areas, and slide the pipe into the fitting. While wearing eye protection and gloves, heat the fitting for several seconds using the torch. (If you overheat the fitting, the flux will turn black.) When the fitting is hot, unwind the solder wire and tap it on the area where the fitting and pipe meet. If the pipe is hot enough, the solder will melt. Quickly insert the solder into the joint. (It should "suck" into the connection.) Wipe away excess solder with a rag. Repeat with remaining pieces until assembly is complete.

STEP 3

Top with a stainless-steel mixing bowl and add water and water-loving plants.

WATER PLANT TIPS

Give the potting soil and trowel a rest. Instead, make a splash on your porch or patio by trying your hand at water container gardening.

CHOOSE A VESSEL

Galvanized tubs, ceramic pots, glass bowls—any watertight container can become a water garden. For best results, find an option that's at least 6 inches deep. Add no more than three plants if the container is 18 inches or less across.

SELECT PLANTS

Water lettuce, *above,* is a leafy floating plant that dangles its roots in water without any need for soil. The rosettes colonize quickly, so you can start with a few and let them spread as the growing season progresses. Some like to perch on wet "legs," others float. Refer to plant tags and your local nursery experts for guidance.

SET THE SCENE

Pick a sunny location for your water garden. If you're working with a deep vessel, add bricks or pavers to act as risers for potted plants. After arranging the pots, gently place river rock to anchor and hide them.

JUST ADD WATER

Fill the container with water, covering the rims of the pots. Regular tap water works fine unless you have a water softener. The chemicals might damage plants. Replenish as the water evaporates.

END THE SEASON

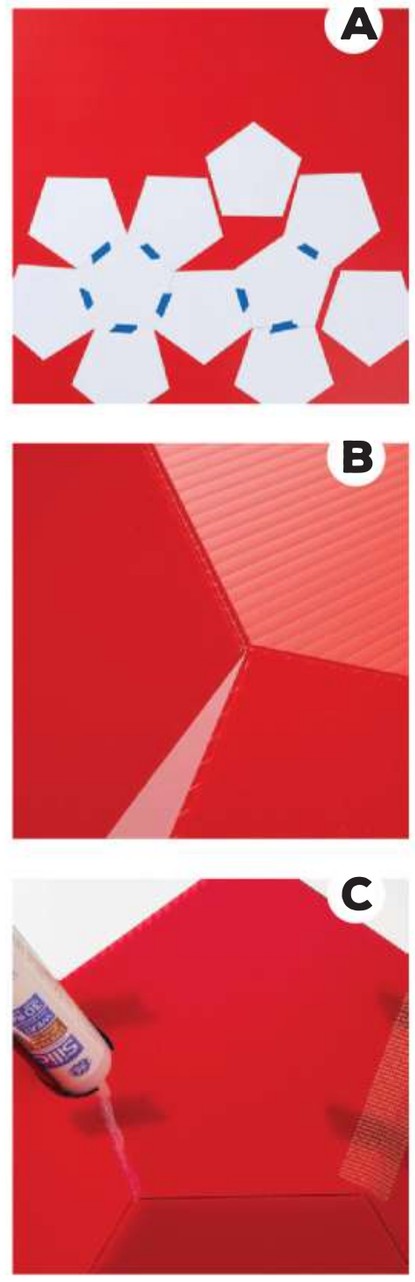
In colder climates, move your water garden to a well-lit indoor space before the first frost. In mild climates, water gardens can be enjoyed outdoors year-round.

GEOMETRY CLASS

Go mod with a geometric container, *above,* crafted from one simple shape. Print on paper and cut out 11 pentagons (available at *BHG.com/DIYPlanter*). Arrange and tape them together on a 4-foot-square sheet of corrugated plastic so nine are touching, *top right,* and the remaining two are on their own.

MATERIALS

- Corrugated plastic sheet
- Painters tape
- Utility knife and straightedge
- Silicone caulk
- Drywall tape



STEP 1

Follow the instructions, *below left,* then trace and cut out the shapes using a utility knife and a straightedge (A). Where the pentagon edges meet, lightly score the plastic by cutting only about halfway through the plastic (B). Fold the scored seams to form a 3-D vessel.

STEP 2

The remaining two pentagons will complete the top sides. Hold all outer seams in place with painters tape. Run a line of silicone caulk along each inner seam (C).

STEP 3

Place a strip of mesh drywall tape over each line of wet caulk, smoothing the tape as necessary for better coverage. Let dry 24 hours, then slide a potted plant inside.

BAG IT UP

Visit the plumbing aisle at the hardware store to pick up the waterproof "fabric" for a planter, *this photo*. Cut a 10-inch-diameter circle, a 30½×10-inch rectangle, and two 1¼×10½-inch strips from PVC shower pan liner, sold by the linear foot or on a roll at most home improvement stores. Using an embroidery needle and waxed leather thread, overlap and hand-sew together the short edges of the large rectangle to form a tube. Stitch the circle to one open end of the tube. Tape one short edge of one strip 2 inches from the top edge of the tube to temporarily hold the strip in place as you sew it to the tube. Place the other short edge about 2¾ inches from the first edge and attach in the same way to form a handle. Repeat on opposite side with the second strip. Cut drainage holes in the bottom of the container and fill with potting soil and plants.

CREATIVE CONTAINERS

CREATE CUSTOM COLORS

CAST-CONCRETE PLANTERS

Create your own one-of-a-kind concrete planters, *opposite*. Disposable flexible plastic containers, such as small milk cartons and 4- to 6-inch nursery pots, work well as outer molds for planters; reusable flexible plastic tumblers from a dollar store prove fitting as inner molds. Estimate the amount of premix needed for a few pots by filling the molds with dry premix, then pouring it into a plastic tub for mixing. We prepared a batch of concrete and pink concrete pigment (Tea Rose, Blush, or Morning Mist by Direct Colors) to make several pots at a time in each color. Blend enough concrete premix, excluding the pigment, for several projects and store it in an airtight, waterproof container. Then scoop out enough premix for each project as needed. Rinse molds and tools thoroughly so they can be reused.

MATERIALS

- Dust mask
- Waterproof gloves
- White Portland cement
- Quartz sand
- Perlite
- Concrete pigment
- Plastic tub and trowel
- Vegetable oil spray
- Molds
- Metal file
- Concrete sealer
- Sponge brush

STEP 1
Gather materials (A) and work outdoors wearing a dust mask and waterproof gloves. Make white-base concrete premix with equal parts of white Portland cement, quartz sand, and perlite (available at building suppliers). Using each mold as a measure, scoop dry mix into a tub and add 2 teaspoons of concrete pigment of your choice (available at *directcolors.com*) into the premix (B). We made three small containers with a batch this size.

STEP 2
Spray vegetable oil on the inside of an outer mold and the outside of an inner mold (C) to facilitate unmolding later.

STEP 3
Gradually add water to the premix (D), blending with a plastic trowel until the concrete resembles stiff cookie dough and a handful holds its form when squeezed (E).

STEP 4
Fill a well-oiled outer mold with concrete to within 1–2 inches of the rim. Press an oiled inner mold into the concrete until a pot with at least ¾-inch-thick walls forms. Level the top of the molded concrete (F).

STEP 5
While the concrete sets, push down on the inner mold and twist it back and forth every 30 minutes. When the concrete has set enough to hold its form, remove the inner mold and make a drainage hole in the bottom of the pot (G).

STEP 6
Allow the concrete to set for 24 hours; remove the outer mold. Let the cast concrete set for another 24 hours. Refine edges with a metal file. Brush concrete sealer on the outside and inside of the pot (H) and let it dry; repeat.

PROJECTS + WORDS: KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: JAY WILDE.

POCKETS FULL OF SUNSHINE

Grow up instead of out with plant pouches sewn from felt, *this photo*. Cut two 15×36-inch and three 15×8-inch pieces of synthetic felt made from recycled plastic (available at crafts stores). Layer the two larger pieces and straight-stitch ¼ inch from outer edges to make the backing for the planter. Notch the short edges of each smaller felt piece about 1½ inches from the edge. Fold and pin the notched corners, and machine-stitch them to form a pocket bottom. Place top edge of a pocket about 3½ inches, 15 inches, and 26½ inches from the top edge of the felt backing. Pin each pocket in place and machine-stitch the sides and bottoms to the backing. Following manufacturer's instructions, set ½-inch grommets at each corner of the backing and on either side of each pocket; you will need 10. Using the grommets, hang the felt planter from screws anchored securely in your wall. Fill with potting soil and annuals.

PROJECTS: OPPOSITE, JENI WRIGHT; THIS PAGE, KATE CARTER FREDERICK. WORDS: OPPOSITE, MARIA V. CHARBONNEAUX. PHOTOS: OPPOSITE, CARSON DOWNING; THIS PAGE, PETE KRUMHARDT.

STEP UP

Cultivate herbs—and a taste for their fresh flavors—in a sun-drenched container, *above*. Enhance a wooden planter with a wash of exterior stain and water mixed 1:1, *right*. Use outdoor fabric to create a sling. (We made two slings for our planter.) Fill the pockets with enriched potting mix and plants.

VERTICAL HERB GARDEN

WOODEN WONDERS

Create a handsome addition to the patio with one of these handmade wooden planters.

STACK-EM UP

The tower of plants, *opposite,* might look complex, but it's actually premade crates stacked on top of one another. Purchase your crates, secure them together with vertical side pieces and connectors, *above,* and stain them all to create your own wall of edible plants.

PROJECT: SCOTT J. JOHNSON. WORDS: WENDY GRAY. PHOTOS: MARTY BALDWIN.

MATERIALS

- Three 8-foot 1×4 cedar boards for vertical side pieces
- Chop saw
- Eight 12½×18×9½-inch wood crates
- Drill
- Thirty 5⁄16×2-inch galvanized hex bolts
- Thirty 5⁄16-inch galvanized washers
- Thirty 5⁄16-inch galvanized nuts
- 6-foot 1×4 cedar board for center in-box connectors
- Twenty-four 2½-inch galvanized deck screws
- Teak oil stain
- 3×50-foot roll of brown landscape fabric
- Staple gun and ¼-inch staples

STEP 1

Cut each 8-foot board in half to create six 4-foot vertical side pieces. Place three crates on the ground with a handle side up and all openings in the same direction. Position three pieces of 4-foot cedar atop them, aligning the top of the first crate and the bottom of the third crate with the ends of the boards. Center the middle crate between the other two.

STEP 2

Drill five holes per box for hex bolts in an X pattern, *left.* Attach cedar to crates with hex bolts, washers, and nuts. Repeat with three more crates for the unit's other side.

STEP 3

Stand each side up vertically. Cut 6-foot cedar into eight 9-inch connectors. Place one remaining crate between outside bottom crates with a 3-inch overlap.

STEP 4

Drill holes, then screw 9-inch connectors through the center crate bottom into vertical side pieces of the outside boxes (A). Screw connectors through outside boxes into vertical side pieces of center crate. Repeat for second center crate.

STEP 5

Stain the structure; let dry. Cut landscape fabric into eight 24×30-inch rectangles. Line crates with fabric and staple in place. Tip: The technique is like wrapping a gift but on the inside. Fill with potting soil and plants.

HARDWARE HEAD

You have two choices in galvanized hardware: zinc-coated and hot-dipped. Zinc-coated, *top left,* will rust eventually; hot-dipped, *bottom left,* is pricier but will hold up longer. We placed our bolts in a crisp X pattern, *far left,* for design punch.

POSH PLANTERS

WOOD-WORKERS SPECIAL

GET PACKING

To make the most of a vertical garden, load it up! Many vertical gardens are too small or sparsely planted to be practical. In our planter, *opposite,* we chose cucumbers, purple basil, lavender, chamomile, and celery for the top box. Next are lemon balm, cucumbers, marigolds, and nasturtium. In the bottom box, we planted dill, parsley, thyme, and oregano. Note: The hinges, purely for decoration, elevate the look of the entire unit. Here's how to make the planter.

MATERIALS

- Eight 8-foot red cedar decking planks
- Saw
- Clamps
- Twelve 8½-inch corner cleats (for vertical interior)
- Drill/driver
- 1½-inch galvanized deck screws
- Outdoor-grade plywood
- 1¾-inch hole bit
- Six 16-inch cleats (for bottom supports)
- Six 14½-inch cleats (for bottom supports)
- Four 6-foot 1⅝-inch-diameter chain link fence posts
- Hacksaw
- Twelve 1⅜-inch line post female hinges
- Twelve 5/16×3-inch galvanized hex bolts
- Twelve 5/16-inch galvanized nuts
- Twelve 5/16-inch galvanized washers
- Twelve 3½×3½-inch satin-nickel interior door hinges

STEP 1

Cut cedar decking planks to lengths in cut list, *below*. Position two 18-inch and two 16-inch decking pieces to form a nearly square box. Hold together with clamps. Place 8½-inch cleat in an interior corner about 2 inches from bottom of the decking pieces and screw cleat into decking with four 1½-inch screws. Repeat in three other corners.

STEP 2

Add a second row of decking, with alternating corners overlapping (A). Screw cleats to decking boards with four 1½-inch screws.

STEP 3

Cut plywood bottoms to size in cut list. Use a hole bit to cut four 1¾-inch post holes in each plywood bottom 2 inches in from the corners. Drill four ½-inch holes for hinge support bolts outside of the post holes in the corners. Drill five ¼-inch drainage holes in a plus-sign pattern in the center of each plywood bottom.

STEP 4

Position a plywood bottom so it rests on corner cleats and screw the 16-inch and 14½-inch cleats into place to secure plywood (B). Repeat steps for two more boxes.

STEP 5

Cut fence posts with hacksaw to 60 inches long. Put a post female hinge piece on each post 6 inches from bottom. You may have to use a hammer or mallet to snap them in place.

STEP 6

Slide one box onto the posts so it rests atop the hinges and secure with hex bolts, nuts, and washers (C).

STEP 7

Place hinge pieces at 28 inches for middle box. Slide box onto posts and secure with hex bolts. Place hinge pieces at 51 inches, slide on top box (D), and secure with hex bolts. Center a decorative interior door hinge in each exterior box corner. Fill boxes with potting soil and plants.

CUT LIST

#	PART	USE	SIZE
4	CHAIN LINK FENCE POSTS	POST SUPPORT	60"
12	CEDAR DECKING PLANKS	BOX WALLS	18"
12	CEDAR DECKING PLANKS	BOX WALLS	16"
3	PLYWOOD	BOX BOTTOMS	15⅞×15⅞"
12	1-INCH SQUARE DOWELS	CORNER CLEATS	8½"
6	1-INCH SQUARE DOWELS	BOTTOM CLEATS	14½"
6	1-INCH SQUARE DOWELS	BOTTOM CLEATS	16"

HEXAGON PLANTER

All it takes are equal-size pieces of wood and some angled cuts to make these stunning cedar planters, *this photo*. For the small planter, use a compound miter saw to cut six pieces of cedar wood to 6⅜ inches wide and 7 inches tall. (For the large planter, cut 12 boards to 8½ inches wide and 7 inches tall.) Cut each side edge at a 30-degree angle, *inset photo*. Glue sides together using exterior wood glue (such as Titebond III). Wipe away excess glue with a damp cloth and let dry. (For large planter, stack two assembled hexagons, glue together, wipe away excess glue, and let dry.) Apply three coats of spar urethane with a bristle paintbrush, letting dry and lightly sanding between coats. Planters are designed to fit around an already potted plant. We kept the bottom open for easy drainage.

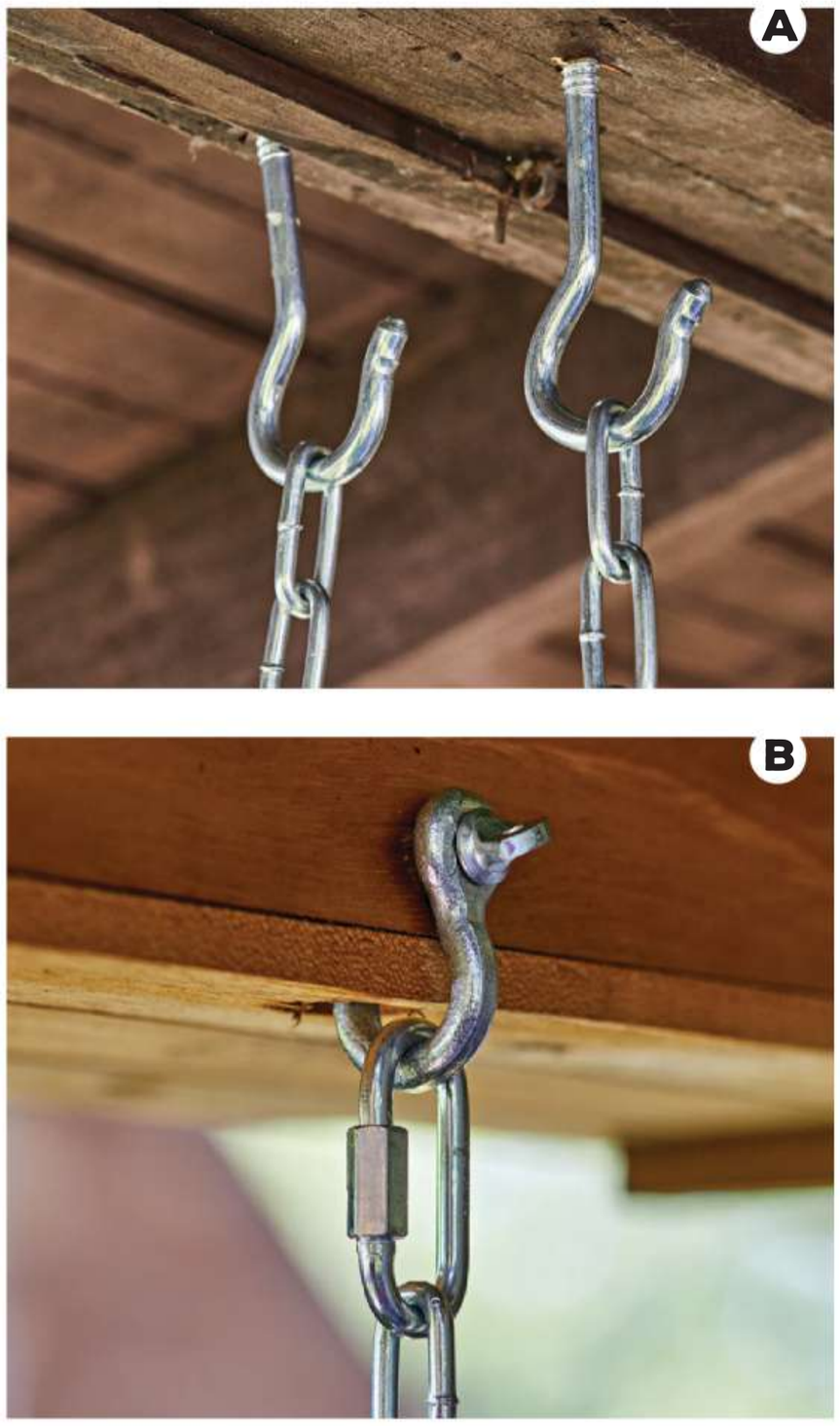
GARDEN VIEW

When you don't have dedicated land for traditional gardening—or even if you do and just want to take a different approach—well-designed planting boxes can be as beautiful as they are functional. This hanging version, *below,* is porch-perfect, giving city dwellers the option to always have fresh herbs on hand.

PROJECT: OPPOSITE, TARI COLBY. WORDS: OPPOSITE, MARIA V. CHARBONNEAUX. PHOTO: OPPOSITE, JASON DONNELLY.

MATERIALS

- Two 8×30×8-inch teak window boxes
- Drill
- Twelve 5/16-inch screw pin shackles
- Twelve ¼-inch quick links
- Four 4 15/16-inch ceiling hooks
- 20 feet of ⅝-inch zinc-plated straight link coil chain
- Bolt cutter
- Twelve 3½×3½-inch satin-nickel interior door hinges



STEP 1
Drill four ⅜-inch holes in each box. Drill each hole 5 inches from a short side and 1 inch from top long edge.

STEP 2
In the top box, drill four ⅜-inch holes. Drill each hole 5 inches from a short side and 1 inch from bottom long edge.

STEP 3
On the underside of the top box, drill four 1-inch holes to anchor the shackles. Drill each hole 5 inches from a short edge and ½ inch from the long edge.

STEP 4
Install screw pin shackles and attach quick links to the shackles. Attach ceiling hooks in pairs with 20 inches between the pairs. (Distance between hooks in each pair will depend on your beam width but should be no more than 8 inches.)

STEP 5
Using a bolt cutter, cut the chain to your desired length; cut four chains for the ceiling to the top box and four for the top box to the lower box.

STEP 6
Hang your first four pieces of chain from the ceiling hooks (A) and attach to the top box's top quick links. Hang the second four pieces of chain from the top box's bottom quick links (B) and attach them to the bottom box quick links. Fill with potting soil and plants.

POSH PLANTERS

MAKE A WATER GARDEN

DOUBLE THE FUN

With water on one side and soil on the other, this 18×33-inch planter, *opposite,* checks all the boxes for a statement patio piece. Build the box yourself and then deck it out with your fave plant picks.

MATERIALS

- Two 8-foot 1×12 cedar boards
- ¾-inch pressure-treated plywood
- One 4-foot 1×2 board
- One 4-foot 1×3 board
- Wood glue
- Clamps
- Drill with screwdriver attachment and assorted bits
- #7×1⅝-inch star-drive stainless-steel trim screws
- #2×1¼-inch Phillips-drive exterior screws
- Waterproofing sealer
- Paintbrushes or sponges
- Rubberized sealant

STEP 1

From 1×12 cedar, cut two 33-inch lengths for the long side panels and three 16½-inch lengths for the short sides and divider. Cut a 16½×31½-inch panel from plywood for the bottom. For the legs, cut four 12-inch lengths from 1×2 and four 12-inch lengths from 1×3.

STEP 2

To build each leg, glue and clamp a 1×3 to a 1×2 to form an L-shape corner. Allow glue to dry, then reinforce the connections with trim screws.

STEP 3

Glue and clamp the frame together (A), making sure it is square. Secure the corners with exterior screws (these will be hidden by the legs).

STEP 4

Apply wood glue to the edges of plywood bottom and attach to the frame with trim screws (B).

STEP 5

Rip the center divider by ¾ inch so it sits evenly atop the base. Attach center divider to the sides with trim screws and at the bottom with exterior screws (C).

STEP 6

Attach an L-shape leg to frame in each corner with glue and exterior screws (D). Fasten from inside the box so screws don't show.

STEP 7

Treat the outside of the planter box with a protective coating of waterproofing sealer. Coat the inside of the box with rubberized sealant (E) to make it watertight. We applied a double coat to the crevices to ensure a watertight box. Drill several ⅛-inch drainage holes in the bottom of the soil compartment only.

WATER GARDEN 101

ASSEMBLY

Add a fountain pump, water, and your choice of pond plants to the water compartment. Weight down the pots with rocks, if needed (tall plants tend to be top heavy in a breeze). Fill the garden compartment with potting mix and your choice of plants. We used low-maintenance pentas, globe amaranth, and licorice plant.

LOCATION

Place the planter where you can enjoy the sight and sound. A deck or patio is a good choice. The location should be close to a power outlet for convenience (you can position plants strategically to hide the power cord). Run the fountain regularly to prevent stagnant water that invites mosquito breeding. Or use mosquito larvicide tablets (such as Mosquito Dunks).

UPKEEP

Many water plants are quite adaptable, so the planter can be placed in full to part sun. The water plants will benefit from periodic fertilizing. Feed garden plants with a slow-release fertilizer scratched into the soil.

OVERWINTERING POND PLANTS

If you live in a cold climate, empty the container in fall and store it and the pump under cover for the winter. Most pond plants can be overwintered outdoors in moist soil in Zones 5 or higher. Exceptions: Umbrella palm and water lettuce will not survive freezing, so place them in a tub of water near a window in a cool basement where they can go dormant. Air-dry canna tubers and store them in peat moss or sawdust in a cool but not freezing location.

PROJECT + WORDS: LUKE MILLER. PHOTOS: CARSON DOWNING.

DIY HOUSE NUMBER PLANTER

STREET SMARTS

Set a modern statement with a cedar sign that also serves as a planter, *opposite*. The structure is clad in 1×3 and 1×4 cedar boards, which were stained to complement the home's exterior (you could also paint the boards or leave them unfinished to weather naturally). Fill the planter with trailing and tall plants, such as snake plants, which can come inside during the winter.

MATERIALS

- Nine 8-foot 2×4 cedar boards
- Three 8-foot 1×3 cedar boards
- Five 8-foot 1×4 cedar boards
- 8-foot 1×6 cedar board
- Circular saw
- Wood glue
- 2½-inch exterior wood screws and driver
- Hammer and 1½-inch nails
- Plastic 12-inch-deep planter box to fit in 12×26-inch opening
- Coated plywood (to build concrete form)
- Rigid foam insulation
- Industrial-strength adhesive (such as E6000)
- Quick-drying caulk
- Concrete mix
- Nonstick cooking spray
- Trowel
- Rebar
- Concrete sealant
- Concrete adhesive

PLANTER FRAME

STEP 1
To build the front, butt two 37-inch 2×4s (A) to the top and bottom of two 27-inch 2×4s (B); screw together from the top down. Repeat for the back side.

STEP 2
To build a side, butt two 11½-inch 2×4s (C) to two 27-inch 2×4s (B). Glue and screw together from the top down; repeat for second side.

STEP 3
Attach the four sections, with the front and back on the outside and making the sides flush. Screw together.

STEP 4
Center a 27-inch 2×4 (B) vertically on the back so narrow edges are flush with top board; glue and screw.

STEP 5
Center two additional 27-inch 2×4s (B) on either side of the previous board, placing these so long edge is flush against the inside edge of bottom and top boards. Glue and screw.

STEP 6
Add a 34-inch 2×4 (D) horizontal brace to the front, positioning it 19¾ inches off the ground. Glue and screw. Attach two 21⅜-inch 2×4s (E), connecting them to the inside of the frame bottom and the horizontal brace. Space so they line up with the Bs on the back assembly.

STEP 7
Glue and screw two small pieces of scrap wood to the two (B) center boards that align with the (E) planter vertical supports; the tops should be 21⅜ inches off the ground.

STEP 8
To create a shelf for the plastic planter, position the two 11¾-inch 1×3s (F) horizontally atop the E boards. Glue and screw, then connect to the scrap pieces on the B boards on the back assembly. Make sure the F boards are level.

STEP 9
Glue and screw two 34-inch 2×4s (D) at the top and bottom of the opening for the concrete numbers plaque, making them perpendicular to the bottom and the horizontal brace and flush with the inside edges to create a cavity for the concrete plaque.

STEP 10
Create a cap by gluing and nailing two 38¾-inch 1×4s (G) on either long side of the top, positioning for an overhang of ⅞ inch. Complete the top frame by gluing and nailing two 13¼-inch (H) 1×6s to the sides, with a matching overhang.

STEP 11
Clad the planter by alternating 1×4s and 1×3s (I, J and K, L), mitering the corners, if desired. Use pin nails and wood glue to secure.

CONCRETE NUMBERS PLAQUE

STEP 1
To create a mold, build a shallow box from a material with a smooth surface. We used a coated plywood for our box, which measured 18⅛×34 inches to fit our planter.

STEP 2
Choose a font and print out house numbers. Ours are 10½ inches tall. Trace and cut numbers from 1-inch rigid foam insulation.

STEP 3
Place numbers backward on base of the mold; glue with industrial-strength adhesive.

STEP 4
Run a bead of quick-drying caulk around edges of the foam numbers. Smooth with your finger and a wet paper towel; let dry.

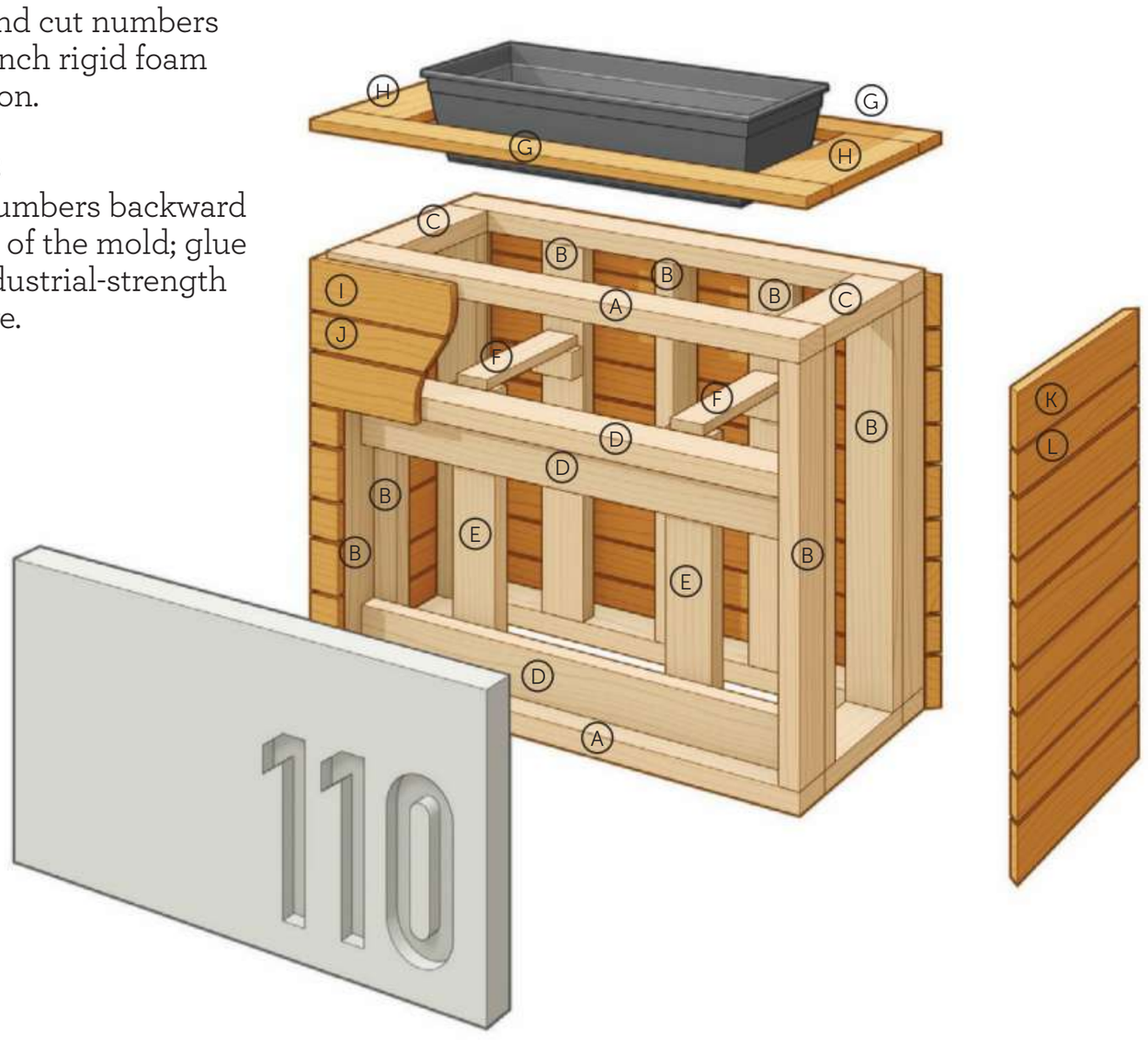
STEP 5
Mix concrete, following manufacturer's directions.

STEP 6
Spray the inside of the mold and the numbers with nonstick cooking spray.

STEP 7
Pour concrete into the mold so it's 2½ inches thick; smooth with a trowel. Set three or four rebar rods into the concrete for strength. Let concrete dry.

STEP 8
Unscrew mold and flip over mold to loosen the plaque; seal plaque with a concrete sealant.

STEP 9
Secure plaque to the planter with concrete adhesive.



CUT LIST

KEY	#	PART	MATERIAL	LENGTH
INTERIOR BOX				
A	4	LONG SIDES	2×4 CEDAR	37"
B	11	SHORT SIDES, CENTER BOARDS	2×4 CEDAR	27"
C	4	SHORT TOP AND BOTTOM	2×4 CEDAR	11½"
D	3	HORIZONTAL BRACES	2×4 CEDAR	34"
E	2	PLANTER VERTICAL SUPPORTS	2×4 CEDAR	21⅜"
F	2	PLANTER SHELF SUPPORTS	1×3 CEDAR	11¾"
G	2	FINISHING CAP LONG SIDES	1×4 CEDAR	38¾"
H	2	FINISHING CAP SHORT SIDES	1×6 CEDAR	13¼"
CLADDING				
I	7	WIDE LONG SIDES	1×4 CEDAR	38½"
J	5	SKINNY LONG SIDES	1×3 CEDAR	38½"
K	10	WIDE SHORT SIDES	1×4 CEDAR	18½"
L	8	SKINNY SHORT SIDES	1×3 CEDAR	18½"

PROJECT: JENI WRIGHT. WORDS: BETH ESLINGER. PHOTO: MARTY BALDWIN.

GO BOLD WITH BLACK

MODERN CLASSICS

Add farmhouse flair to your porch, patio, or deck with easy-to-assemble planters that flaunt crisp lines and classy black.

PROJECTS: JENI WRIGHT. WORDS: MARIA V. CHARBONNEAUX. PHOTOS: CARSON DOWNING.

BOX PLANTER WITH STAND

With cedar boards and steel square tubes in the lead roles, this sophisticated plant stand looks like it hails from a high-end garden retailer. Even if you're a beginner with a limited toolbox, this project comes together with little fuss. A handsaw will do the job of a compound miter saw, and a reciprocating saw is easily rented from a tool supplier or borrowed from a handy neighbor.

MATERIALS

- Four 10-foot 1×4 cedar boards and three 8-foot 1×4 cedar boards
- 9 cedar shims
- Three ½×48-inch round dowels
- Compound miter saw
- Sandpaper
- Exterior wood stain + sealer in black
- Paintbrush
- Reciprocating saw
- Six 1×1×48-inch steel square tubes
- ½×72-inch threaded rod
- Sixteen ½-inch nuts and washers
- Eight ½×2-inch carriage bolts
- Spray bonding primer
- Exterior spray paint in black
- Exterior wood glue
- Clamps
- Drill
- 1-inch exterior wood screws
- 1¼-inch exterior wood screws
- Heavy black plastic
- Staple gun
- Twine
- 4 small screw eyes
- Galvanized wire
- Wire cutters

STEP 1

Using a compound miter saw, cut 1×4 cedar boards into ten 42-inch pieces (planter box long sides and shelf), six 12½-inch pieces (planter box short sides), and four 40½-inch pieces (planter box bottom). Trim the cedar shims into four 9½-inch braces and three 11¼-inch braces for the planter box interior and two 13¾-inch braces for the shelf. Cut the round dowels into two 45-inch lengths and one 42-inch length for the trellis. Lightly sand and apply black exterior stain to all wood pieces; let dry.

STEP 2

Using a reciprocating saw, cut steel square tubes into four 38¾-inch legs and four 14¼-inch supports. Cut the threaded rod into four 15-inch lengths. Rough up all surfaces with sandpaper. Coat metal pieces, washers, nuts, and bolts with spray bonding primer and black spray paint; set aside and let dry.

STEP 3

To assemble a short planter box side, place three 12½-inch cedar boards side by side and glue and clamp the boards. Secure the boards at each end using a 9½-inch brace and 1-inch screws. Repeat to assemble the other short side.

STEP 4

To assemble each long planter box side, place three 42-inch cedar boards side by side; glue and clamp them together. When dry, use 1¼-inch screws to secure the long sides to the short planter box sides through the attached braces.

STEP 5

Flip the assembly over. Place an 11¼-inch brace ¾ inch from the bottom

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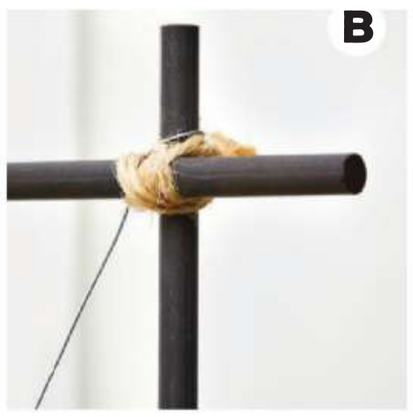

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of the planter and secure it using 1-inch screws. Repeat to install another brace on the other side of the box. Glue and clamp together the four 40½-inch cedar boards; let dry. Secure the bottom boards to the braces using 1-inch screws. Flip the planter right side up and attach the last 11¼-inch brace inside the planter at the center of the bottom boards.

STEP 6
To assemble the bottom shelf, glue and clamp the long edges of the four remaining 42-inch cedar boards. Attach the 13¾-inch braces 1⅝ inches from each end using 1-inch screws.

STEP 7
Using a ½-inch bit, drill four holes in each long planter box side at the following intersections: 1⅛ inches from top and 9½ inches from the side, and 8½ inches from the top and 8 inches from the side. Drill holes in each steel leg at each of the following points measured down from the top: 1 inch, 8½ inches, 11 inches, and 31¾ inches.

STEP 8
Lay the planter box on a long side, and line up the holes in the steel legs with the corresponding holes in the planter box. Insert carriage bolts and secure with washers and nuts. Repeat on the other long side.

STEP 9
Line up the short steel supports with the leg holes below the planter box; insert threaded rods through the legs and hollow supports. Secure both ends with washers and nuts. Repeat on other side. In the same manner, connect the remaining supports to the legs at the bottom to form the shelf supports (A). Place the shelf on the supports.

STEP 10
Line the inside of the planter box with heavy black plastic. Position the long wood dowels at the back corners of the box between the plastic and the wood. Pull the plastic taut and staple in place. Use twine to attach the shorter dowel to both vertical lengths (B).

STEP 11
Space four screw eyes evenly along the top back edge of the planter interior. Thread wire through the screw eyes and around the horizontal trellis bar as desired to create a grid for climbing plants. Fill the planter box with potting soil and plants.

STAND-UP JOB

Two inexpensive 24×72-inch wood trellises from a home improvement store make this plant stand, *opposite* and *below,* easier to construct than it appears. Cut ¾-inch square dowels into 16 lengths each measuring 11¼ inches. Stain all wood surfaces with black exterior stain; let dry. Eight-inch-diameter duct caps—primed and spray-painted black—are the perfect perches for potted plants. Drill a hole ⅜ inch from the top edge on opposite sides of each cap. Lay one trellis flat on the ground; stagger caps, centering them within the square openings and securing them to the horizontal trellis rungs using ½-inch screws. Lay the other trellis flat on the ground, place the trellis assembly on top so it lines up, and secure the duct caps in the same manner. Stand up the assembly. Using a pin nailer, attach the 11¼-inch dowels at each intersection along the sides.

A TALL STAND LIKE THIS ONE NEEDS PROTECTION FROM THE ELEMENTS. SECURE IT TO A WALL WITH SCREWS OR STRAPS AS A SAFETY PRECAUTION.

POSH PLANTERS

DOWN AND AROUND

When turned upside down, tomato cages become super simple plant stands, *left*. Invest in cages made from heavy-gauge wire so they can support the weight of your planters loaded with dirt, plants, and water. Using wire cutters, remove the legs and trim the cages to desired heights. Spray the cages with bonding primer and paint; let dry. For extra oomph, unfurl three-strand Manila rope, wrapping it around the horizontal rings as you go. Secure the rope ends with a knot or a little silicone glue. Small, tapered planters sit securely in tall stands, while large, wide-base planters are best reserved for short ones.

CURVES AND ANGLES

Weather-resistant medium-density overlay (MDO) provides the framework for a pair of modular plant stands, *this photo*. Using a circular or table saw, cut a MDO panel into the following: two 17-inch squares and two 32×17-inch rectangles for the tall plant stand and four 22-inch squares for the square plant stand. To assemble the tall plant stand, center the rim of a 13-gallon dairy bucket on one of the 17-inch squares and trace. Cut a hole ⅜-inch smaller than your traced circle using a jigsaw. Adhere the squares to the short edges of the rectangles with exterior-rated wood glue, then drive two screws through each side, countersinking the screwheads. Fill the screw holes with patching compound; let dry. Sand the entire plant stand. Prime and paint the plant stand, lightly sanding between coats to minimize brushstrokes. Put a layer of rocks in the bucket for drainage, then add potting soil and plants. Drop the bucket in the opening *(inset photo)*. To build the square plant stand, repeat the process using a 17½-inch-diameter metal tub and the 22-inch square MDO pieces.

UPDATE PLANTS EACH SEASON

POSH PLANTERS

ALFRESCO ART

A freestanding frame puts the focus on a bountiful display of succulents, *opposite*. Three rectangular duct elbows function as the planter boxes.

MATERIALS

- Three 2×2 cedar balusters
- Compound miter saw
- Exterior wood glue
- Clamps
- 1-inch exterior screws
- Sanding block
- Black gel stain
- Outdoor spar urethane
- Paintbrush
- Four heavy-duty screw eyes
- Drill
- Three 3¼×10-inch 90-degree rectangular duct elbows
- 60 inches of 1/16-inch galvanized cable
- Needle-nose pliers
- 12 wire rope clips
- Bolt cutters

STEP 1

Using a compound miter saw, cut cedar balusters into the following lengths: two 19½-inch vertical supports, two 16-inch horizontal supports, and two 5½-inch base blocks.

STEP 2

Glue and clamp the vertical and horizontal supports to form a rectangle; let dry. Add 1-inch screws for extra strength. Place the base blocks 3 inches from each side and perpendicular to the frame bottom. Glue and screw in place.

STEP 3

Sand the structure. Apply stain, following manufacturer's instructions; let dry. Apply outdoor spar urethane.

STEP 4

Install screw eyes in both horizontal supports 4½ inches in from each vertical support.

STEP 5

Drill 1/16-inch-diameter holes 1½ inches in from the short edges in both the top and bottom of each duct elbow.

STEP 6

Cut the galvanized cable in half. On the right-hand side, feed one 30-inch length through a wire rope clip; loop it through the upper screw eye and then back through the rope clip (A), leaving a short tail and tightening the clip using needle-nose pliers.

STEP 7

Feed the cable through drilled holes in all three duct elbows, securing the cable with rope clips above and below each duct. Feed the cable end through the last rope clip, loop through the bottom screw eye, and insert it back into the rope clip (B).

STEP 8

Repeat Steps 6 and 7 on the left-hand side using the other length of cable. Adjust the spacing of the duct elbows as desired. Pull the cables taut, tighten the clips, and cut excess cable.
To finish, fill the duct elbows with gravel for drainage, sandy soil, and succulents.

PLANT SUCCESS

A planter is only as pretty as what's growing in it. Follow our planting tips to make sure your containers are up to snuff all season.

THE RIGHT MIX

Regular garden soil is too dense for containers and may contain disease or pest organisms. A good potting mix—one that's well-aerated, well-drained, and packed with nutrients—is essential for healthy plants.
To make your own, mix 8 quarts potting soil with vermiculite or perlite, 1 quart coarse sand, and 4 quarts sphagnum peat moss or composted manure. Sprinkle the mix with a slow-release plant food before planting.

GO FAUX

When planting super deep tubs or containers, save on soil. Fill the bottom third with plastic bottles or packing peanuts before topping with your potting mix. You'll spend less and your pots will be lighter to move.

THRILLER, FILLER, SPILLER

Plant options can feel overwhelming, but this basic rule of thumb can save you time wandering the nursery aisles. Start with a thriller, an attention-grabbing bloomer with a strong upright growth habit, placed in the center. Surround it with fillers, plants with a rounded shape that disguise the thriller's base and add texture or complementary color. Finish with a spiller, one with a sprawling habit that trails over the container's edge and has a leaf or flower shape that contrasts with the others. All should have similar water and sun requirements.

Need a little help picking the perfect combo? Try these no-fail plant recipes for your planters:
BHG.com/ContainerIdeas

PROVIDE TLC

While it seems like common sense, be sure to keep up on routine maintenance. When watering, drench the soil and avoid saturating foliage. (A drip irrigation system, found at garden stores, is a great solution if you'll be gone for prolonged periods.) Remove spent flowers frequently to keep plants blooming for weeks.

BOX IT UP

Spruce up basic window boxes with paint, metal, and repurposed materials to give the planters new life.

CHALKBOARD BOX

Welcome guests or display daily messages with this fun take on a traditional chalkboard, *below*. Use exterior adhesive to attach old schoolhouse slate to a basic window box (or prime then paint using chalkboard paint). Fashion a simple frame from salvaged barn boards. Leave the weathered, chipped paint finish or give the box a fresh coat of your favorite hue.

IRONWORK BOX

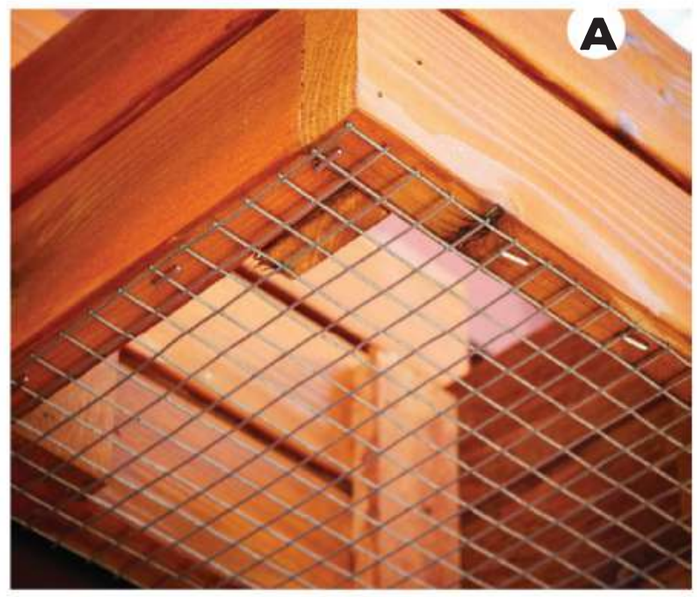
Salvaged wrought-iron fencing adds fancy trim to a plain window box, *opposite*. Look for ironwork pieces that won't overwhelm the size of your box and that can be cut using a hacksaw. Cut a piece to fit the length of the box. Leave the iron in its original finish or give it a fresh coat of paint. If painting, be sure to use a stain-blocking metal primer first. Use screws to attach the iron piece to the inside front of the box.

POSH PLANTERS

PROJECTS: STEPHANIE BRANDENBURG. WORDS: KATE GIBSON. PHOTOS: MARTY BALDWIN.

GOT YOUR NUMBER

Besides dressing up windows, planter boxes are also charming additions to house numbers or a front porch rail. The 24-inch-wide planter plaque, *below,* accommodates four house numbers. Make yours wider or narrower, depending on the length of your numbers. Protect all wood pieces with spar urethane or an exterior stain before assembling.



STEP 1

Using a compound miter saw, cut the following from cedar 1×3 boards: three 24-inch pieces (for back boards), two 9¼-inch pieces (for planter front), and four 6¼-inch pieces (for planter sides). From ½×2-inch crafts boards, cut four 4¾-inch and two 7-inch supports. Sand and stain all pieces; let dry.

STEP 2

Place the three back boards facedown, leaving ¼ inch between boards. Position the 7-inch supports vertically on the back boards about 3 inches from the side edges; secure with wood glue, clamps, and pin nails. Lay the two planter front pieces facedown and ¼ inch apart, then butt two planter side pieces to one end, gluing, clamping, and pin-nailing in place. Repeat on opposite side.

STEP 3

Glue the box to the back boards and nail from the back. Strengthen the box by securing a 4¾-inch support at each inner corner. Staple a 9×7-inch piece of wire mesh at the bottom of the planter to allow for drainage (A). Install house numbers following manufacturer's instructions and attach D-ring wall hangers on the back for mounting to the side of the house (B).

STEP 4

Plant annuals in a container with drainage holes and place container inside box.

PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, CARSON DOWNING; OPPOSITE, ADAM ALBRIGHT.

HANG TIME

A stamped-on paisley pattern dresses up a sleek metal planter perched on a porch railing, *this photo*. Filled with herbs, spring greens, and edible flowers, the box holds a colorful and delicious display within easy reach. To re-create this box, apply exterior enamel paint to a foam stamp using a small brush or sponge, then press the stamp firmly onto the metal planter. If you don't like the impression, quickly wipe it off with a damp cloth. Reapply paint to the stamp for each impression.

CROQUET BOX

Old yard games give a basic window box a classic, forever-summer feel, *left*. For a rustic-appearing box, paint or stain it in an earthy hue. When dry, use a candle to apply wax at the edges, corners, and any other parts you want to appear weathered. Paint the box a vintage green color; when dry, lightly sand where the wax was applied to expose the color underneath. Varnish two vintage croquet mallets to preserve their perfectly imperfect look. When dry, attach them to the box with screws.
The game's metal wickets placed along the front of the box add a decorative finish.

CEILING-TIN BOX

A window box takes an elegant turn when covered with Victorian-inspired ceiling tin, *left*. Scour architectural salvage shops for old tin. We used a vintage border piece. If you can't find the old stuff, buy a new tin piece and give it a distressed paint finish. Use tin snips to cut the metal to fit the front of the window box. When cutting, be sure to wear gloves and take care with the sharp edges. Use construction adhesive or nails to secure the tin to the box.

SHUTTER BOX

A traditional window dressing transforms a basic window box from boring to bright, *opposite*. The key is to find a shutter the same size as the front of your box. Once you succeed, decide whether to paint the shutter or leave it in its found condition. We chose to paint ours a sunny yellow. When dry, attach the shutter to the box using screws.

BEFORE

PROJECTS: STEPHANIE BRANDENBURG. WORDS: KATE GIBSON. PHOTOS: MARTY BALDWIN.

STUDY IN CONTRASTS

A dark painted window box, *above,* makes an elegant base for the purple and green hues of summer plants. To create this look, apply trim pieces to the front of a basic box and paint the entire thing with black exterior paint.

ADDED ELEGANCE

Add architectural moldings to a window box for a sophisticated touch, *opposite*. Look for detailed ceiling moldings and intricate brackets to attach to a basic box. Paint all the pieces white for a clean, cohesive look. Fill with succulents and evergreens for a low-maintenance display.

PHOTO: THIS PAGE, MATTHEW BENSON.

POSH PLANTERS

DIY WOOD TRELLISES

Why pay for a garden trellis when you can build your own? All you need is a bundle of wood.

ON THE GRID

If you have a view that is not the best, divert attention with a colorful trellis, *opposite,* composed of squares surrounded by a simple frame in a complementary hue. Plant your favorite climber under the trellis and tuck a few interesting plants around it to enhance your new focal point.

FOR A FINE VINE

A trellis can do more than support a vine. The classic fan-shape trellis, *right,* decorates a blank wall as the white pops against the colored siding. A trellis can also create a screen or even function as deck railing. Let your imagination and creativity fuel the design possibilities.

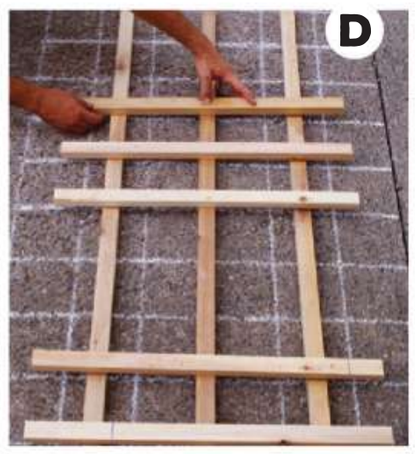
QUICK, EASY, AND PRETTY

A RISING STAR

A black-eyed Susan vine towers over blue salvia in a cobalt blue pot. The trellis was given a honey-color stain and a decorative star for a bit of pizzazz.

MATERIALS

- 1×2 cedar boards in 6- or 8-foot strips (amount needed depends on design)
- Chalk
- Saw
- Screwdriver
- 1¼-inch exterior screws
- Exterior paint or deck stain (optional)

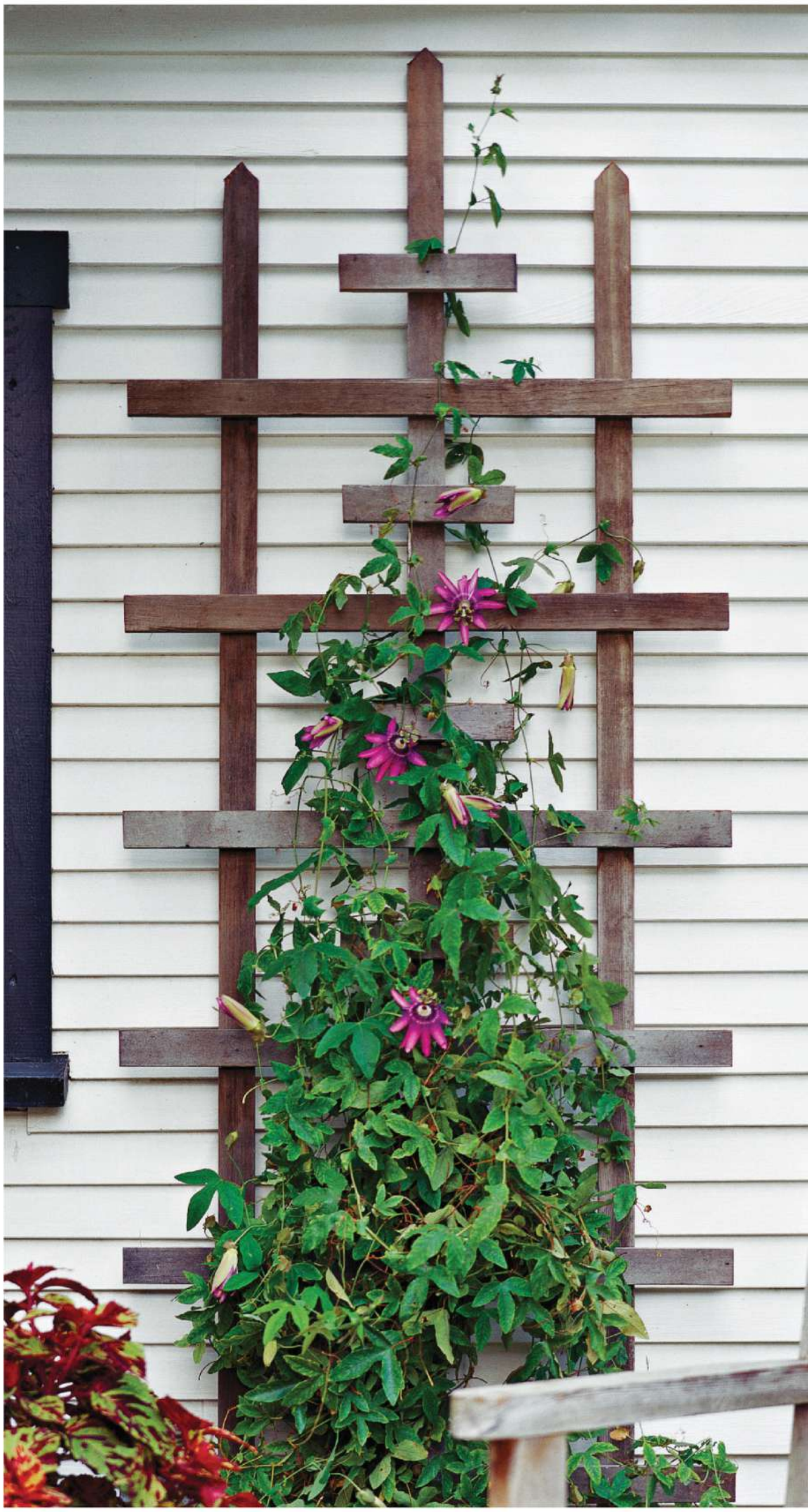


STEP 1
On a sheet of paper, sketch out your trellis, including dimensions. Tally and gather the number and lengths of boards needed (A).

STEP 2
Using chalk and one of the straight cedar boards as a guide, draw several parallel lines 6 inches apart on a concrete surface (B). Draw another series of parallel lines perpendicular to the first set, creating a grid of 6-inch squares (C). This is not intended to create an actual pattern for the trellis. Rather, it offers a visual reference to keep the boards parallel and the right angles true when you lay out the trellis pieces.

STEP 3
With a handsaw or a power saw, cut cedar pieces to the needed lengths. Create the desired pattern by laying out the boards on the chalk grid (D). Before securing with screws, make adjustments to create the pattern you want.

STEP 4
Wherever boards intersect, drive two screws (E). Do this from the back side, so the screwheads won't be visible. Optional: Stain or paint your trellis.



CLIMBING TO NEW HEIGHTS

If you have a long expanse of white siding, you can transform it with the simple addition of a vertical trellis. The trellis, *above,* commands attention with its eye-catching shape and its supporting role for the regal purple passionflower blossoms that climb their way to the top. For a wonderful spot to sit and enjoy your garden, all you need to add is a chair and a place to set your lemonade.

PHOTOS: PETE KRUMHARDT.

ADD CLASSIC DETAIL

DRESS IT UP

Give elegance to potted plants when you craft an obelisk from wire or repurposed metal accents.

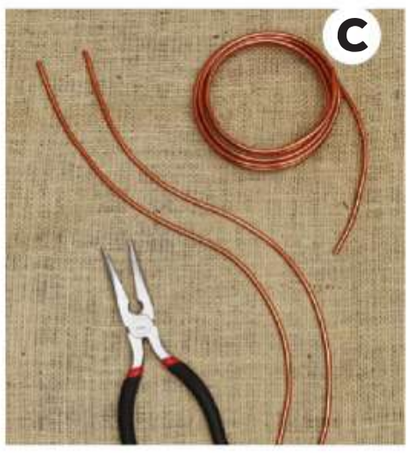
PROJECTS: KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: JACOB FOX.

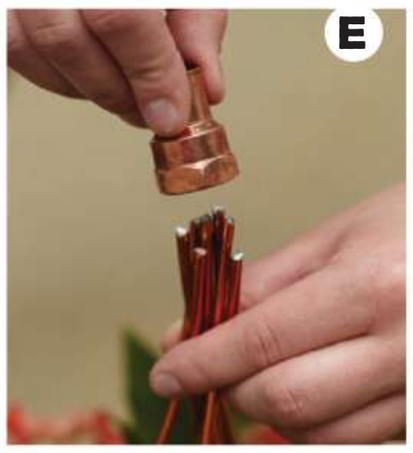
SCULPTURAL TOPPER

The simplest plantings become more artful when highlighted by metallic structures. Modern materials take on ancient sculptural form to frame foliage anchored in evocative urns. The gold- and copper-wire obelisk, *opposite,* is made of decorative Mega Wire. The 6-gauge aluminum wire, which is more malleable than steel or copper, is thick as a stout plant stem and available in a treasure trove of colors. To echo the subtle gleam, brush a plain plastic pot with a thin coat of metallic paint.

MATERIALS

- 9½-inch resin urn
- 150-grit sandpaper
- Paintbrush
- Exterior acrylic paint: gold or copper metallic
- Rag
- Potting mix
- 'Lois Burks' begonias
- Oasis Mega Wire in gold and copper
- Measuring tape
- Wire cutters
- Florists clay
- Copper plumbing pipe reducer





STEP 1
Gather materials, *left.* Lightly sand the resin container. Sand more in some spots and less in others. Barely dip a dry paintbrush into the metallic paint and dab off excess on a rag. Lightly brush the paint on a small area then dab the paint with a rag (A); let dry.

STEP 2
Fill the pot three-quarters full with potting mix. Add plants and fill in around them with potting mix (B). Water thoroughly.

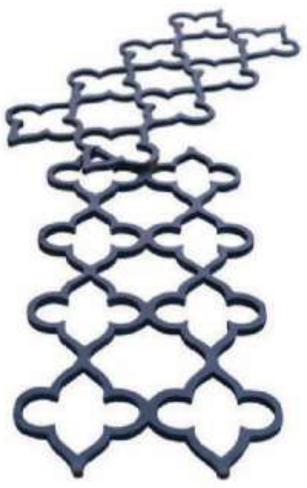
STEP 3
Using wire cutters, cut 4–8 pieces of wire the same length. Bend them into matching shapes, such as simple arches (C).

STEP 4
Evenly space the shaped wires around the edge of the pot, pressing them into the potting mix (D).

STEP 5
Gather the free wire ends in the center (E). Roll a 2-inch piece of florists clay and press it into the plumbing pipe reducer. Push the clay-filled copper piece over the gathered ends to hold wires in place.

FRESH LANTERN LOOK

A simple iron lantern attracts new light in a lush potted garden, *opposite*. Secure the lantern in the dirt and plant herbs or annuals around it. Thyme serves as the centerpiece, while vines of *Tweedia caerulea* spiral up the frame.



TABLETOP TRELLIS

Salvaged iron fence pieces create a unique petite trellis, *right*. Place each trellis piece in the soil and lean together. Secure in place with floral wire, if desired. Fill in with a colorful mix of florals and greenery. Bright pink and chartreuse offset these dark fence pieces.

PROJECTS: DONNA TALLEY. PHOTOS: QUENTIN BACON.

HIGH WIRE

A wire shelf becomes the vertical element of this knockout planter, *opposite*. Look for items you can repurpose that fit within a window box or planter. As the ivy fills in, the form will become completely covered and lush.

SPIRAL TRELLIS

Bend 6-gauge wire into a spiral almost the same diameter as your pot to form a tiny winding trellis, *right*. Drill a hole in the top end of a 24-inch painted dowel. Anchor the top of the spiral in the dowel, *inset*. Stand the dowel in the pot and insert the bottom of the spiral into the soil. Guide a climbing plant as it grows to twine up the spiral. We planted ivy and New Guinea impatiens.

PROJECTS: OPPOSITE, DONNA TALLEY; THIS PAGE, KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: OPPOSITE, QUENTIN BACON; THIS PAGE, PETE KRUMHARDT.

REPURPOSE OLD BIKES

TRASH TO TRELLIS

Crafted from salvaged treasures, these garden structures send vines scrambling skyward.

UPCYCLED RIMS

Make your own wheel trellis, *opposite,* by gathering four to six old bicycle wheels, sans tires, in various sizes; spray-paint them and let dry. Arrange the wheels in a rectangular shape so each one touches at least two other wheels. At the points of contact, *above,* connect the wheels by drilling holes and securing with hex-head bolts, washers, lock washers, and nuts. Form a frame with zinc-plated slotted angle; add 3 feet to the length to sink into the ground. Use hex-head bolt assemblies to connect the slotted angle at the corners. Connect wheels to the frame with bolts.

PROJECTS: KASEY & JORDANA HENKE. PHOTOS: ADAM ALBRIGHT.

GARDEN TRELLISES

GARDEN GATE TRELLIS

Transform a small bed into a lush centerpiece with two vintage garden gates turned into a trellis, *opposite*. A pint-size plot, no bigger than a child's sandbox, can fill bushel baskets with summer produce. The secret: Add vertical growing space. Starting with two old iron gates found at a flea market, we created a 6-foot-tall A-frame planter-topped trellis that doubles as a dramatic focal point for our 5-foot-square raised bed.

MATERIALS

- Two similar-size garden gates
- Two 12-inch squares of plywood
- Eight 2-inch bolts
- Drill
- Several salvaged tin ceiling tiles
- Small nails
- Chicken wire
- Sturdy wire
- Two 1×4 boards (cut to the width of your gates)
- Four 12-inch rebar stakes

STEP 1
Lean the two gates together. Push the tops apart slightly.

STEP 2
Place a 12-inch square of plywood against each open end at the top of the gates. Mark the edges of the gates, and cut off the excess plywood. Attach the plywood at the top of the gates by drilling holes through the boards and gates, fastening them together with 2-inch bolts.

STEP 3
Fold salvaged ceiling tiles over the plywood to hide it. Attach the tiles to the plywood with small nails. Mold chicken wire into a planter. (Don't let the chicken wire hang below the bottom of the plywood.) Tie to the gates with sturdy wire.

STEP 4
Line the chicken wire with sphagnum peat moss or coconut fiber. Fill with a high-quality potting mix. Wire a 1×4 piece of wood to the bottom of each gate. Drill a 1-inch hole at the end of each board and drive a 12-inch-long rebar stake through each hole and into the ground. Hide the boards with a layer of soil or mulch.

PORCH RAILING TRELLIS

Repurpose a stretch of wooden deck railing with a coat or two of stain and set it up vertically to create a trellis, *above*. In this petite backyard, there wasn't space for a garden, so we attached metal planters to the railings. Drill holes in the back of the planters and hang them on screw-in hooks twisted into the railing. You could also use an old wooden ladder to create a similar look.

PROJECTS: OPPOSITE, JANE AUSTEN MCKEON; RIGHT, ASHLEY ROSE. PHOTOS: OPPOSITE, SCOTT LITTLE; RIGHT, ALISE O'BRIEN.

GARDEN VINES FOR TRELLISES

Long stems and twining tendrils make these plants perfect candidates for trellises. For quick color, choose an annual flowering vine. If you want a vine that returns year after year, plant a perennial vine.

ANNUAL VINES

HYACINTH BEAN
Hyacinth bean is a long-blooming and easy-to-grow vine that will decorate a trellis with flowers until the first frost in fall.

MORNING GLORY
Morning glory unfurls its circular blossoms when the sun comes up and then closes them in the heat of the day. Soak seeds overnight before planting to soften their hard seed coats.

SWEET PEA
Sweet peas are prized for their fragrance, and their blossoms make wonderful cut flowers. Plant seeds in early spring and enjoy blossoms in early summer.

VEGETABLE VINES

CUCUMBER
Cucumber vines are easy to train on a trellis. Using soft pieces of cloth—an old T-shirt cut into strips works well—tie the young tendrils to the trellis. Soon the vine will take off and begin climbing on its own.

POLE BEANS
Pole beans are known for their copious production of French, Roma, or shelling beans. Many bean varieties are available as a climbing plant; look for "pole bean" on the package.

SUGAR SNAP PEAS
Sugar snap peas thrive when planted in early spring and harvested in early summer. Or plant a fall crop in late summer and harvest in midfall.

PERENNIAL VINES

CLEMATIS
Clematis boasts blooms in many colors and flower types. Choose your favorite cultivar and water regularly during the first year to help the plant get established.

CLIMBING HYDRANGEA
Climbing hydrangea is an elegant vine for shade. It displays clusters of fluffy white flowers for several weeks in summer.

HOPS
Hops rapidly produce 15- to 20-foot-long vines decorated with yellow-green pinecone-shape flowers. The vine dies back to the soil in winter. Prune old growth.

PROJECTS: KASEY & JORDANA HENKE. PHOTOS: ADAM ALBRIGHT.

SCREEN DOOR TRELLIS

An old screen door, purchased at a vintage shop, and salvaged wood combine to create a trellis with rich patina, *left*. Begin by removing the screen from the door. Gather lumber, preferably vintage pieces with eye-catching color or texture. Use a table saw to cut the lumber into 2-inch-wide strips. Cut the strips to length as necessary to create a simple geometric pattern (or two) inside the door frame. Nail the salvaged wood to the door frame, *above*. You can seal the finished trellis with varnish to preserve the wood or leave it unfinished and allow it to weather naturally. Anchor the trellis into the ground by attaching it to two 4-foot-long U-channel posts, *above top,* sunk 2 feet into the ground.

WEEKEND PROJECT IDEAS

MAKE AN ENTRANCE

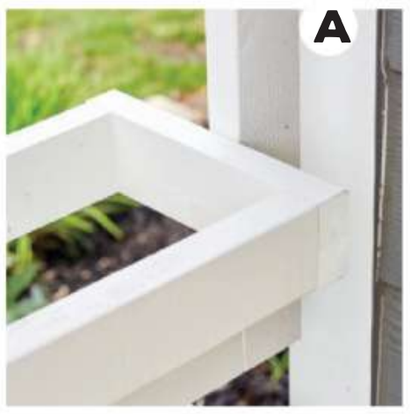
Go bold with head-turning garden projects that crank curb appeal up a notch as they let your personality shine.

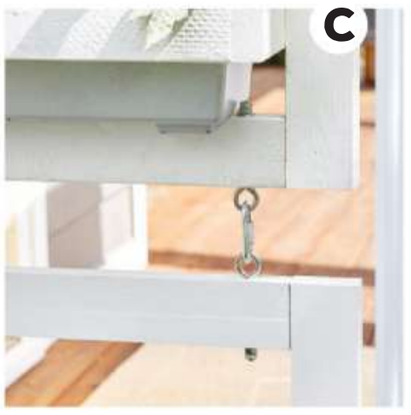
HANGING TOUGH
This vertical planter, *above,* works well for an herb garden, but if privacy is your goal, choose dense plantings that grow tall to fill the entire frame. Add trailing plants to further obscure the view.

PROJECTS: LESLIE POYZER. WORDS: PAMELA PORTER. PHOTOS: ADAM ALBRIGHT.

MATERIALS

- 3 plastic window box planters (See Step 1 for size.)
- 16 linear feet of 2×3 pine (Ripping to 1⅛×2½ inches as we did is optional.)
- Table saw
- Drill, drill bits, star-drive bit
- #9 2¾-inch star-drive screws
- #10 3¾-inch star-drive screws
- #8 2-inch star-drive screws
- Paint and paintbrush
- 8 carabiner clips
- 12 eyebolts
- Twelve ¼-inch nuts and washers
- 4 screw eyes





STEP 1

Measure space where the planters will hang. Purchase plastic window boxes to fit the width of the space allowing 8–10 inches extra.

STEP 2

For the short sides of the window box holders, measure the width of plastic planter right below the lip and add 2½ inches. Cut six pieces of pine to this length. For the long sides of the planter holders, measure the length of the planter right below the lip and add ¼ inch. Cut six pieces of pine to this length. To assemble, use 2¾-inch screws to secure two short boards and two long boards, predrilling all holes. Repeat with remaining boards to assemble the holders.

STEP 3

For the horizontal pieces of the frame, measure the long side of the planter box holder and cut six pieces of pine to this length. Predrill these pieces 2 inches from the ends to accommodate two eyebolts. (Be sure the planters fit between the eyebolts.) Measure the height of the overall opening. Total the measurements of one carabiner clip and two eyes on hardware and multiply by 4. Subtract the hardware total from the overall opening number, then divide by 3. Cut six pieces of pine to this length for the vertical pieces of the frames. To assemble a frame, use 3¾-inch screws to secure two horizontal boards and two vertical boards in a rectangle, predrilling all holes. Repeat with remaining boards to assemble three frames total.

STEP 4

Use 2-inch screws to secure a planter box holder inside each of the three frames (A) in a position that allows the planter box to rest on the bottom frame board.

STEP 5

Paint and let dry. Install eyebolts into each frame. Predrill and install screw eyes above and below where planter will hang. Connect the frames with carabiner clips and hang (B, C). Insert planters.


Mail
ring

FRAME OF MIND

Give functional items the attention they deserve by creating a 3-D exterior work of art. Fashioned from cedar and pine, this wall plaque, *opposite,* corrals a light fixture, mailbox, and planter into one tidy and attention-grabbing exhibit. When measuring placement of each item, consider the height of growing plants as well as that of an open mailbox lid. Resist the temptation to distribute the items evenly and instead allow for visual resting space in the composition, as we did under the light. In keeping with a modern vibe, the steel ring bracket, *below,* gives the illusion the flowerpot suspends in midair. Consider a pot with an attached drainage dish to keep water and soil from dripping onto the porch.

MATERIALS

- 2×3 pine boards
- Table saw
- Miter saw
- Wood glue
- Clamps or strapping
- White semigloss paint
- Paintbrush
- 1×6 cedar boards
- Exterior-grade stain (We used oil-base Cabot Semi-Transparent Deck and Siding Stain in Natural.)
- Stain brush
- ¼×2-inch lath
- Staple gun and staples
- 2½-inch hole saw
- Screwdriver
- #9 2¾-inch star-drive screws
- Drill and star-drive bit
- Mailbox
- Flowerpot hanger
- Exterior light fixture

STEP 1

Measure the location and the size of your elements to determine the size of the plaque. If electrical wire does not already exist, run it in the wall for the light fixture or hire a professional to do the work. For frame, use table saw to cut pine boards to desired size, mitering corners and rabbeting the back 1×1½ inches.

STEP 2

Glue the frame assembly, holding pieces together with clamps or strapping pulled taut around the length and width of the frame. Let glue dry, then paint the frame and let dry.

STEP 3

Cut cedar boards to fit inside the rabbeted frame, allowing ¼ inch for expansion and contraction at sides, top, and bottom. Coat with deck stain and let dry.

STEP 4

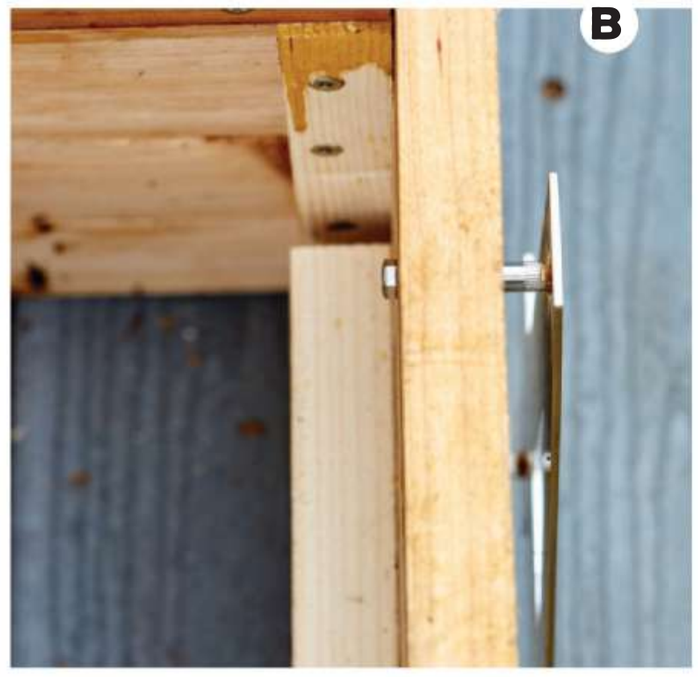
Lay cedar boards into rabbeted side of frame, keeping them in place and allowing for expansion and contraction by stapling lath to the back of the frame (A).

STEP 5

Using a hole saw, cut an opening for the electrical wires. Secure the plaque to wall using two screws that will be concealed behind the mailbox and light fixture. Screw the mailbox and flowerpot hanger to the plaque, and install the light or hire an electrician to do so.

PULLING DOUBLE DUTY

This multitasking planter box, *below,* displays house numbers and flowers all in one. Be sure to tuck this step-hugging project safely out of the way of foot traffic.



STEP 1

Cut 1×4 cedar boards for the front and back equal to the long side of a plastic planter plus 2 inches; cut side boards equal to the short side plus ½ inch. Cut enough boards to run horizontally on all sides to the height desired and allowing for the foot if positioning on a step.

STEP 2

Cut ¾×¾-inch pine corner blocks to join all cedar boards. (You will need six if your box fits on a step as ours does.) For the front panel, join the cedar boards to corner blocks at each end, predrilling and screwing through the blocks and into but not through the cedar boards and using two screws per board. Repeat for back panel.

STEP 3

Cut two ¾×¾-inch pine pieces the length of your plastic planter and screw one each to the inside of front panel and back panel to act as a shelf to hold the plastic planter (A). Determine placement of hidden-mount house numbers (B) and predrill before securing numbers to the front panel. To complete the box, screw the cedar side and foot boards to the front and back panels via the corner blocks. Add a filler piece of cedar at the top of each side to cover the gap created by the corner blocks.

FINISHING TOUCHES

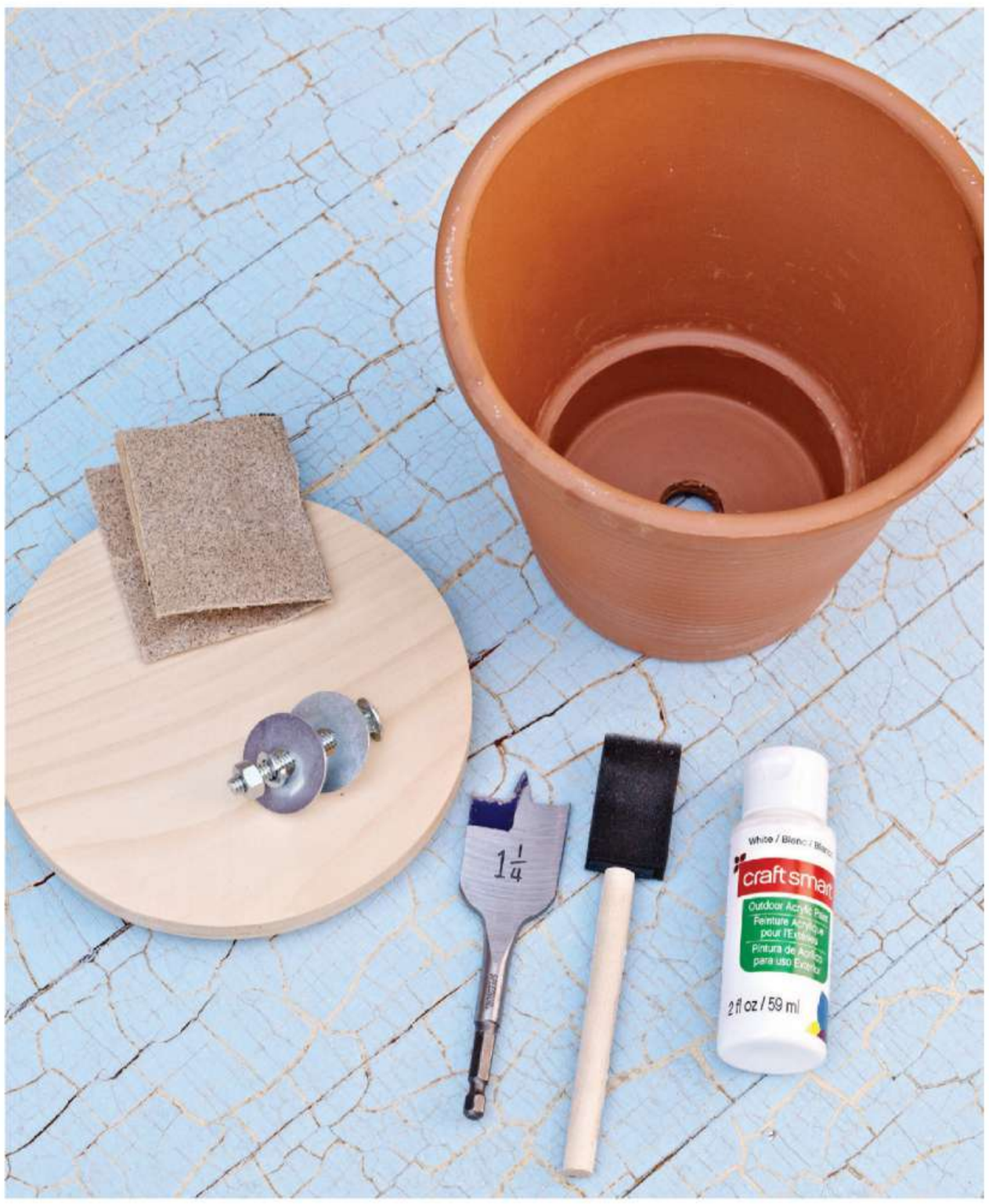
Grouping flowerpots of various sizes, *this photo,* is an inexpensive and versatile outdoor design solution that can be changed with seasonal plantings throughout the year. At this entry, the grouping also helps visually balance the plaque on the opposite side of the door. For a pop of color, paint the front door in a color that contrasts with the color of the siding (we used the Sherwin-Williams paint color, *left*). Complete the front entry with a rug customized with a DIY welcome message, *inset photo.* Print letters onto cardstock and cut out. Spray back of letters with adhesive and press letters to the mat. Apply paint to the top of mat, around the letters. We used a stencil brush and latex paint, but spray paint would make this project even easier! Let dry and remove letters.

PAINT COLOR: KINGDOM GOLD SW 6698

INVITE BIRDS TO STAY

FOR THE BIRDS

These simple projects help create a natural gathering place that provides food, water, and shelter for winged beauties.

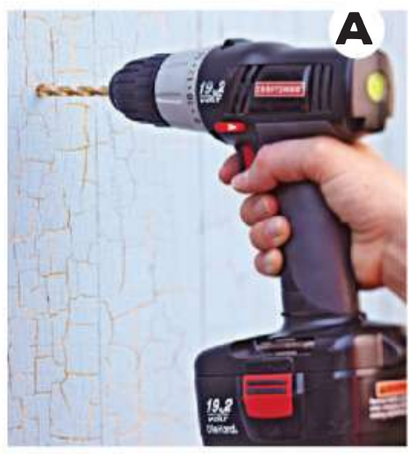


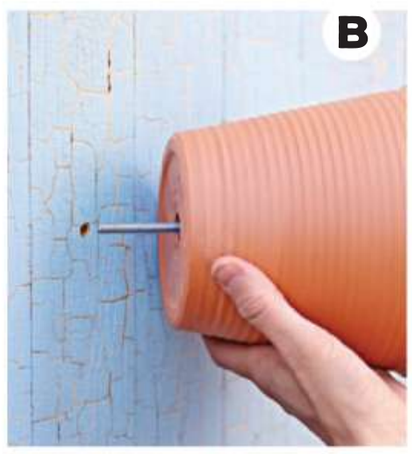
CLAY POT BIRDHOUSE

A flowerpot fitted with a 1¼-inch entry hole, *opposite,* offers housing for small birds, such as the chickadee, nuthatch, tufted titmouse, and wren. Site the house away from high-traffic areas of the yard and near trees and shrubs that offer shelter, giving birds the privacy they need to nest, hatch, and raise broods. Locate the birdhouse where it is protected from late-day sun in summer and wind in winter.

MATERIALS

- Drill and drill bit
- 7-inch-diameter terra-cotta pot
- Two 1¼-inch fender washers
- ¼×2½-inch carriage bolt
- ¼-inch nut
- 1¼-inch hole-boring drill bit
- 6-inch-diameter round wooden plaque
- Sandpaper
- Sponge brush
- Outdoor acrylic paint





STEP 1
Drill a hole in a fence or other surface to mount the birdhouse (A).

STEP 2
Slide a washer over the bolt, then push the bolt through the pot's drainage hole and into the fence hole (B).

STEP 3
Slide a washer over the exposed end of the bolt on the other side of the fence; twist the nut onto the bolt and tighten it to secure the pot (C).

STEP 4
Drill a 1¼-inch-diameter entry hole in the wooden plaque, about 1½ inches from the edge. Sand smooth the edges of the entry hole. Using a sponge brush, paint only the outside of the wooden plaque to make it more weather-resistant; let dry. With the hole near the bottom, press the plaque into the pot until it is firmly wedged in place. A perch is not necessary and might provide a foothold for predators.

CLEAN HOUSE

Remove old nesting material from the birdhouse every autumn when you are certain brooding season is done.

PROJECT + WORDS: KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: PETE KRUMHARDT.

STAR POWER

Molded seeds, *this photo,* are a decorative way to feed feathered friends. Gather the materials (A). In a large mixing bowl, dissolve two packets of unflavored gelatin in ⅔ cup boiling water. Add 2 cups of birdseed; stir. Let set for five minutes, then stir until the seeds have absorbed most of the liquid. Lay cookie cutters on baking sheets lined with waxed paper. Press seed mixture firmly into the shapes. Cut a length of twine for each shape, knot the ends, and press a knot into each still-soft shape. Refrigerate the ornaments overnight. Set ornaments on a rack to air-dry for several days and let harden completely before hanging outdoors.

WATER MUSIC

A lotuslike dripper attached to a submersible pump enhances a birdbath, *right,* and creates a delightful garden accent. The sound of gently trickling water attracts birds to fly in for drinks and splashy baths. To make the birdbath, use a 6×48-inch PVC pipe as a base, anchoring 1 foot of it in the ground. Wrap the base with a length of twig fencing cut to fit (A). Set a 3-inch-deep saucer on the base. Place a few stones in the basin to secure the dripper and provide firm footing for birds. Always keep the pump covered with water.

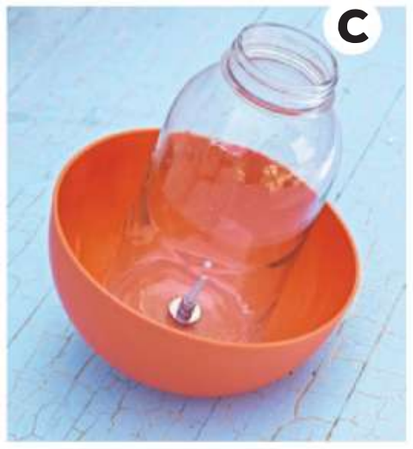
QUICK PROJECT

FEED THE BIRDS

Welcome birds to your yard and help sustain them by setting up a feeder, *opposite*. Offer a continuous supply of food to keep birds coming year-round. Feathered friends will reward you by eating insects in the garden and entertaining you with their antics. As diners, birds search out specific menus. Cater to varied tastes by offering a seed mix that includes black sunflower, safflower, and millet, then watch as cardinals, juncos, house finches (shown *opposite*), nuthatches, chickadees, and others fly in to feast.

MATERIALS

- Canning jar
- Painters tape
- Safety glasses
- Drill
- ⅜-inch glass-boring drill bit
- 5⁄16-inch drill bit
- Plastic bowl
- Plastic plate
- Chicken feeder base
- Large nail and hammer
- ¼×2-inch eyebolt
- Four 1¼-inch fender washers
- Four ¼-inch lock washers
- Two ¼-inch nuts
- ¼×2-inch carriage bolt



STEP 1
Gather materials, *left*. Place a folded dish towel under the jar to absorb vibrations while drilling. Tape an X on the jar bottom and mark the center. Wearing safety glasses, drill through the glass, using the glass-boring bit (A).

STEP 2
Use the 5⁄16-inch bit to drill a hole centered in the bottom of both the bowl and the plate. Use the nail and hammer to make a hole centered in the bottom of the chicken feeder (B). To attach the bowl to the jar, insert the eyebolt through a fender washer, the bowl, and the jar. Fasten the jar with a fender washer, two lock washers, and a nut (C).

STEP 3
Attach the plate to the chicken feeder by repeating the hardware assembly—but using the carriage bolt (D).

STEP 4
Fill the jar with birdseed. Screw the chicken feeder onto the jar (E).

DINE AND DASH

Hang a feeder where birds can fly in easily to perch on the feeder and eat or feed on the ground beneath it. Select a location where a nearby tree offers easy escape from predators.

RECYCLED BIRDHOUSE

Once a carrying case for worms and other fishing bait, an old bait box now houses a nest of songsters. You can use any sort of circular element, such as an old metal button or washer, in place of the doorknob plate.

MATERIALS

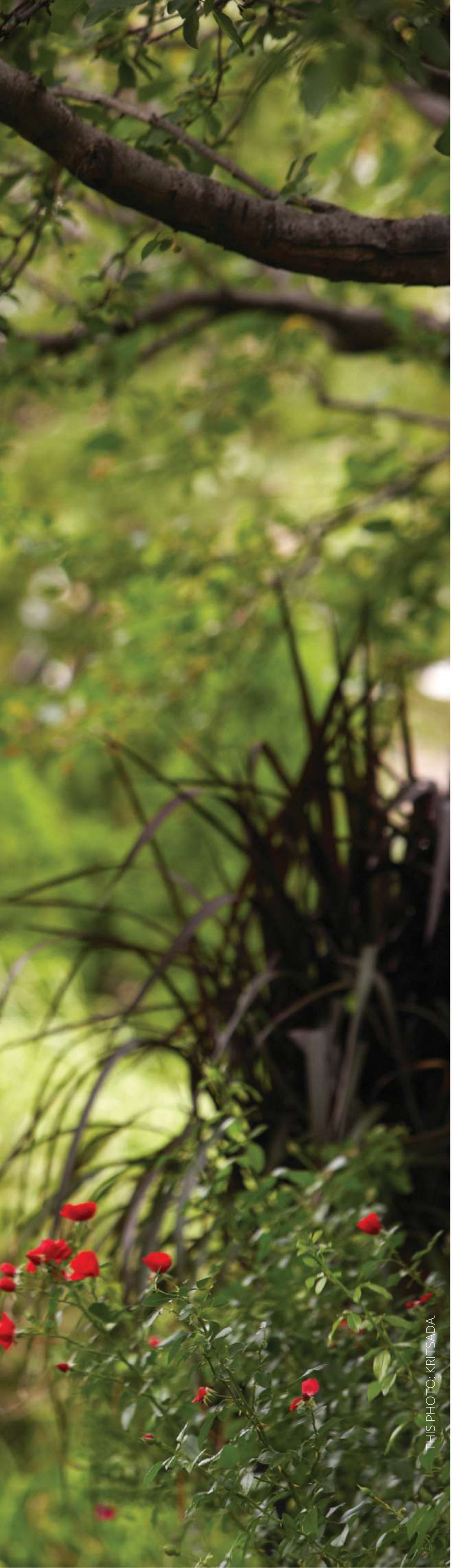
- Drill equipped with a 1¼-inch hole-boring drill bit
- Vintage bait box (Ask flea market vendors to keep an eye out for a bait box for you. You can use a vintage lunch box for this project, too.)
- Metal file
- Superglue
- Small doorknob plate
- Wire cutter
- Three vintage brass house numbers (New metal house numbers will work if you can't find old brass ones.)
- Epoxy adhesive
- 4–5 feet of rope
- 1-inch-wide vintage spring

STEP 1
Using a drill, drill a 1¼-inch entrance hole in the bait box door. Smooth the edges of the hole with a metal file.

STEP 2
Apply superglue to the back of the doorknob plate and position it about 1 inch below the bait box door.

STEP 3
Using a wire cutter, clip the metal points off the backs of the vintage house numbers. Apply epoxy adhesive to the backs of the house numbers and position them a few inches below the bait box door.

STEP 4
Select the location for your birdhouse. Then cut the desired length of rope to suspend the house. Thread the rope through the top of the bait box and tie it in a knot about 6 inches above the box. Slip the vintage spring onto the rope. Hang your birdhouse.



PLANTS TO ATTRACT BIRDS

A bird-friendly yard includes a mix of plantings to provide food, shelter, nesting sites, and nesting material. Choose plants that offer seeds, berries, and nectar to a variety of birds.

FOUNTAIN GRASS

Fountain grass seed heads entice birds to forage during fall and winter.

PURPLE CONEFLOWER

Purple coneflower provides large seed heads as well as cover for ground-feeding birds.

SUNFLOWER

Easy-to-grow sunflowers bloom in summer, then develop seeds favored by birds.

ARONIA

Aka chokeberry, Aronia is a hardy shrub with clusters of bird-pleasing berries. It grows in any type of soil.

CRABAPPLE

These popular spring-flowering trees bear fruit in summer and fall.

VIBURNUM

Viburnum includes a diverse group of shrubs that produce bird-friendly shelter and berries.

FUCHSIA

Fuchsia will bloom all summer in a hanging basket, feeding hummingbirds with sweet nectar.

PENSTEMON

Penstemon is favored by hummingbirds and gardeners for its colorful bell-shape flowers.

SALVIA

Salvias, including perennial and annual varieties, attract hummers with nectar-filled blooms.

JUNK MARKET FINDS

COUNTRY-STYLE BIRD FEEDER

Junk Market Style expert Sue Whitney transformed farm finds into a fresh, hip bird feeder, *opposite,* made of a barrel hoop and a cultivator disc. Keep your eye out for junk at flea markets and auctions to create your own one-of-a-kind upcycled bird feeder.

MATERIALS

- Barrel hoop, approximately 24 inches in diameter
- Marking pen
- Drill and ¾-inch metal drill bit
- Four ¾×1½-inch washers
- Six ¾-inch nuts
- ¾×36-inch threaded rod
- Two ¾×2-inch washers
- Cultivator disc, approximately 18 inches in diameter
- Two ¾-inch couplers
- Two ¾×2-inch screw eyes
- 4-inch-long spring
- Rope

STEP 1

Measure the hoop's circumference; mark the location for a hole, then mark another hole location on opposite side of hoop. Using a ¾-inch metal drill bit, drill holes at marks (A).

STEP 2

Thread a small washer and a nut onto the rod about 10 inches from one end (B). Insert the rod through the hole at the hoop top. Tighten with another small washer and a nut on the hoop's inside.

STEP 3

Place one nut and one large washer on the rod, then insert the rod through the center of the cultivator disc (C).

STEP 4

Place disc in hoop's center with the large washer flush against the top. Tighten the nut. With a large washer on the rod's bottom, tighten a nut on the rod (D).

STEP 5

Place a small washer and nut on the rod. Stretch the hoop; insert the rod in the remaining hole. Tighten the washer and nut (E).

STEP 6

Place a small washer and a nut on the bottom of the rod; tighten them against the barrel hoop. Thread a coupler onto the bottom of the rod (F).

STEP 7

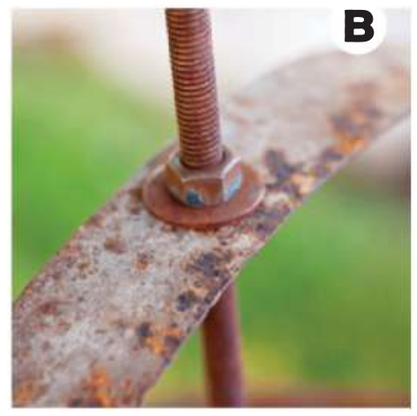
Thread a coupler onto the top of the rod. Screw a screw eye into the end of each coupler (G).

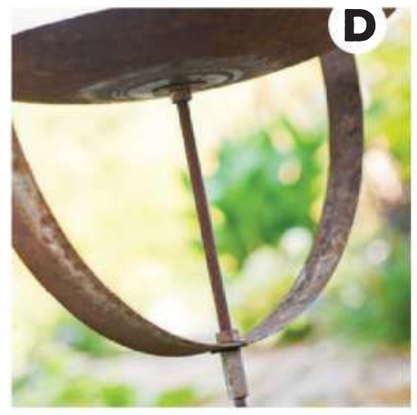
STEP 8

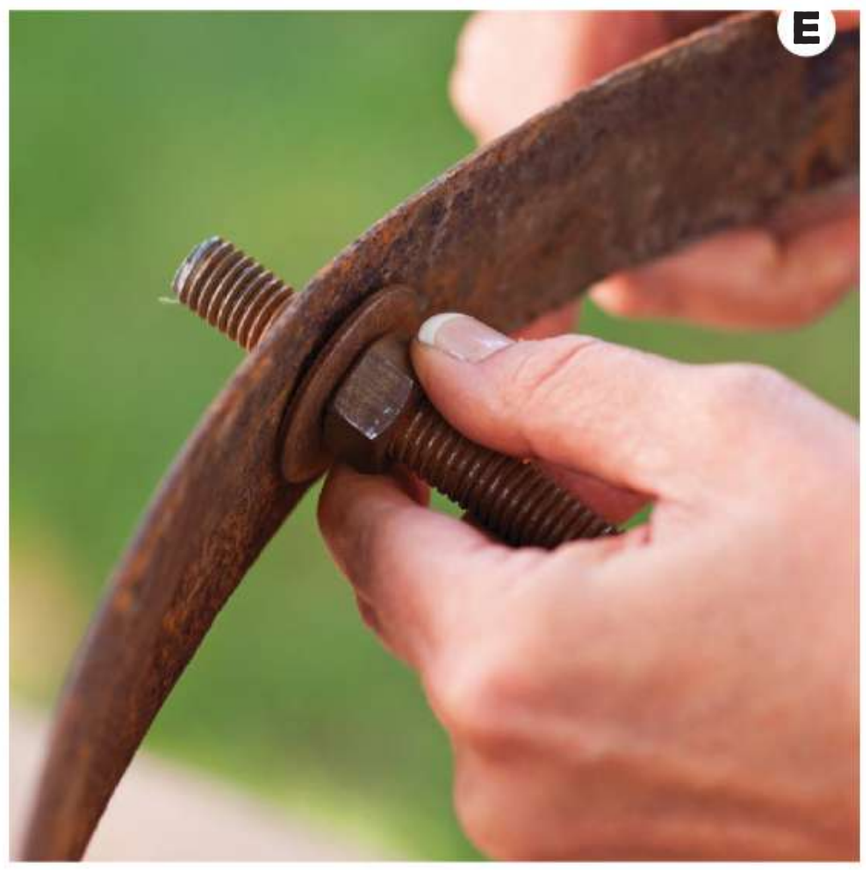
Add the spring to the screw eye at the top of the feeder (H). Hang the feeder by securing rope to the top of the spring.

STEP 9

Fill the disc with birdseed (I).







PHOTOS: KRITSADA.

1-HOUR PROJECT IDEAS

LIVE WIRES

Bend and shape wire any way you want to create decorative garden accents.

WIRE IN BLOOM

Use a different gauge and color of wire for each of five flower layers, *opposite* and *above*. Vary the size of each flower. Bend a series of petals and twist together the bottoms to secure them, leaving a tail wire on each flower, *right*. Pinch petals for variety, or cut the loops to make filaments for flower centers. Stack the five flowers; twist the tails together to form one blossom, then suspend from a length of fine wire.

PROJECTS + WORDS: KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: PETE KRUMHARDT.

WORD STAKES

Print words using a script font or hand-draw for patterns to make stakes, *above*. We chose 152-point Rochester to craft word stakes with 6-gauge wire (we used colorful Mega Wire). Leave a 15-inch tail of wire for the stake, then press and bend wire over the paper pattern, letter by letter, starting with the word's last letter, *right*. Cut the wire after the entire word is formed.

HANDY LANTERNS

Transform canning jars into lanterns with twisted-wire handles, *this photo*. Cut a length of wire long enough to fit snugly around the jar's neck. Twist two loops in the wire at opposite sides of the jar, then twist the wire ends together and add a handle.

LED FAIRY LIGHTS ADD WHIMSY

GARDEN NIGHT-LIGHTS

Repurposed ceiling light globes exude sparkling charm after sunset.

Add ambience to a garden or outdoor living area by filling glass globes from ceiling light fixtures with bright, warm LED light strings. Upcycle glass globes from flea markets or find them at home improvement centers. Shapely globes made of colored or textured glass create the most interesting effects. For height, we dismantled a vintage table lamp and supported a globe on its metal base. Glazed pots serve as bases for the other lights. Each base shelters the light string's battery pack from exposure to the elements. When selecting outdoor string lights, consider the type and length to suit your needs (see tip, *right*). We chose battery-operated LED lights for their fireflylike effect. An 11-foot strand fits perfectly inside a glass globe. Choose light strings with clear cables that will be less obvious inside the globes. When tucking these appealing lights into your garden, consider a grouping of three or more globes rather than displaying a single, lone light.

MATERIALS

- Three 11-foot, 30-light battery-operated LED light strings
- 24-gauge wire
- Wire cutters
- AA batteries
- Three glass ceiling light globes (Ours are 4 inches, 6 inches, and 7 inches in diameter.)
- 5½-inch-diameter blue glazed pot
- 4-inch-diameter green glazed pot
- Old table lamp base

STEP 1
Wrap a wire around a light string cable (A) to make the strand more manageable. Cut wire to match length of light string. Install AA batteries in the battery pack. Repeat for each light string.

STEP 2
Tuck a strand of lights into a 7-inch-diameter glass globe (B), bending and shaping the strand to fill the globe. Set the lights to switch on at dusk, and place the battery pack inside the 5½-inch pot. Set the globe on top of the pot.

STEP 3
Thread a light string through the drainage hole of a 4-inch pot and into the 4-inch-diameter globe (C). Turn the pot upside down over the battery pack to conceal it, and set the globe on top of the inverted pot.

STEP 4
Fill a glass globe with a wired light set and place globe on top of the lamp base, tucking the battery pack inside the base (D). Place the trio of lights near a garden bed edge, in a patio corner, or anywhere you want an unexpected hint of light.

BRIGHT IDEA

Set battery-operated LED light strings to turn on and off automatically, or use remote control light strings to turn on your night-lights whenever needed. Solar-powered strings eliminate batteries but require sunlight to charge.

PROJECTS + WORDS: KATE CARTER FREDERICK. PHOTOS: JACOB FOX.

PHOTO: ADAM ALBRIGHT

METAL WORKS

Metal that develops a patina over time forms a charming base for front porch plantings.

PLANT WRAP

Combine the interesting textures of metal with pretty plants, *above,* to quickly update a deck or patio. Measure the height of your planter. Use a straight lumber edge and a metal-cutting blade in a circular saw to measure, mark, and cut a tin sheet (or two, depending on the planter's size). Cut the piece to the measured height plus 1 inch and long enough to wrap around the container plus 2 inches. Curl the tin into a cylinder, overlap the edges, and use a drill with a ⅛-inch metal/steel drill bit and a rivet tool to secure the ends, *inset photo,* placing rivets every few inches. If you want to achieve varied heights for a pleasing grouping, place a potted plant on an overturned pot before measuring and cutting a metal piece.

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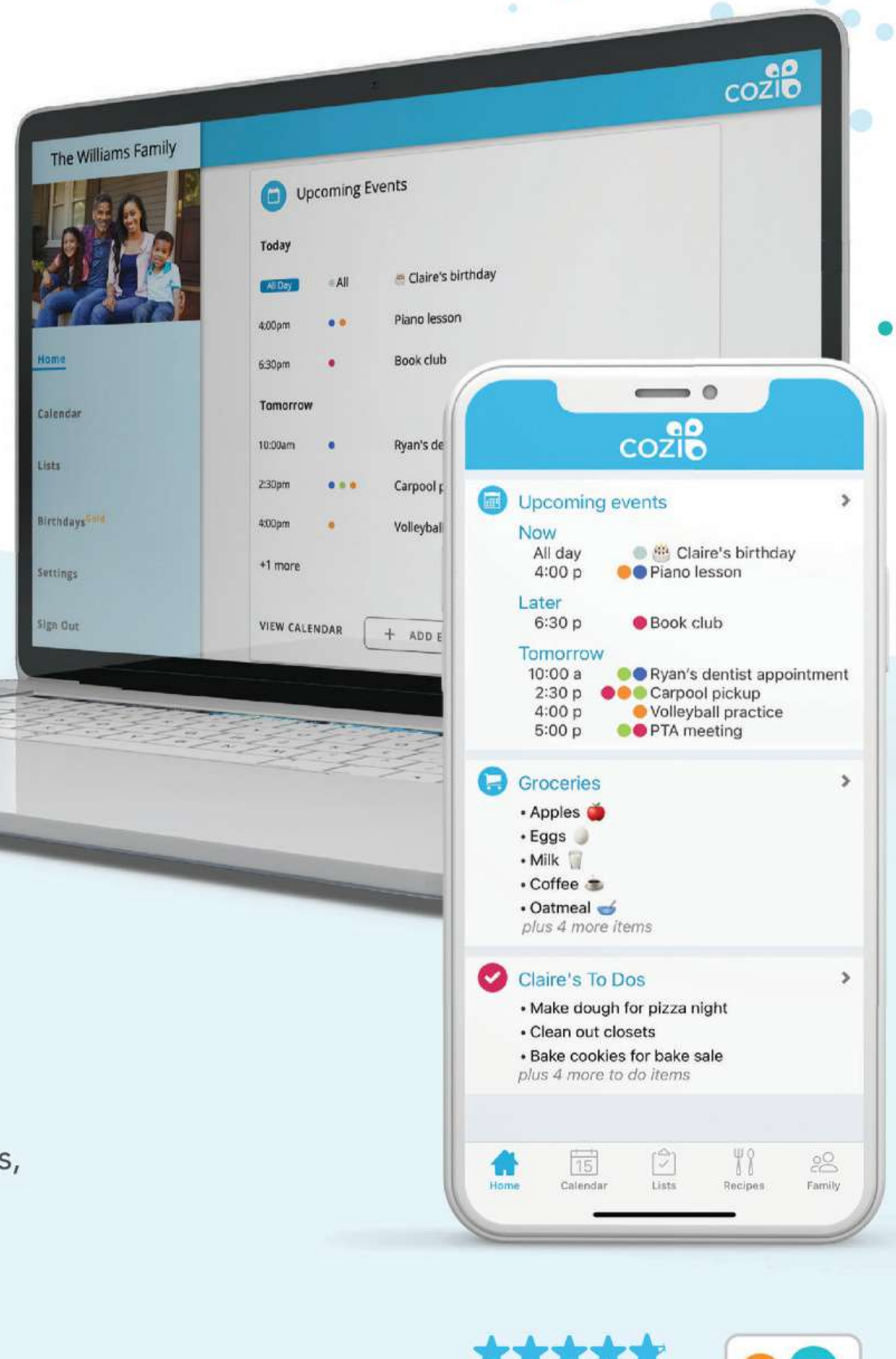

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