SP 810-A

GROW IT INTRODUCTION

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Start with Four Simple Steps:

1. Pick the best spot

- Porches, balconies and patios can all work well for container gardening.
- Make sure plants can get six to eight hours of sunlight.

2. Select a good container

- Terra-cotta, wood, plastic or ceramic containers can all be used. Different types of containers dry out at different rates. Plants in terra-cotta pots are likely to need watered more often than those in plastic pots.
- Be sure there are drainage holes at the bottom of the container.
- Dark colored containers are better for early spring and fall because they warm up faster in sunlight. Lighter colors can be best for summer because they are cooler.
- Make sure the container is large enough; plants drying out in containers that are too small is one of the most common mistakes.

3. Use new potting mix

- Don't use soil from the yard or buy plain topsoil, peat moss or manure. Buy potting mix designed for raised beds or pots. It will both hold water and drain better. It will also be lighter and easier to handle than soil.
- Use new potting mix each year to reduce issues with disease.

4. Be ready to water and fertilizer regularly

- Containers need watered regularly. Check them every day and water before the plants wilt
- Make sure the potting mix is wet throughout and not just on top.
- Use a soluble fertilizer every week to keep your plants growing well.

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