

# Hydroponic Wine Bottle Herb Garden

## How to get started:



1. Carefully take both halves of the wine bottle herb garden out of its box. Take off the protective packaging between the two halves of the bottle. Set assembled bottle garden aside.
2. Mix your plant's fertilizer by carefully pouring the powdered fertilizer found in the small bag into a recycled 1 gallon jug that is empty and clean. It is easier to start with an empty jug. (\*1 package of fertilizer per gallon\*)
3. Now fill the jug to an inch or two from the top and screw on the cap.
4. While holding the cap on securely, shake or invert your jug several times to mix the fertilizer.
5. Label the bottle as fertilizer and keep out of the reach of children and pets.
6. Leave the plastic wrap on the top half of the bottle. Separate the two halves of the bottle being careful not to spill the clay pebbles.
7. Fill the reservoir of your hydroponic herb garden with the fertilizer solution. Stop filling when the water approaches an inch or two from the top.
8. Place the top half of the bottle garden back on the now filled reservoir.
9. Locate your packet of seeds. Keep in mind that not each seed will grow but almost all will and your wine bottle herb garden is really only meant for 1 full sized herb plant.
10. It is suggested that you only plant the number of seeds mentioned on the seed packet. A few seeds is 2-3.
11. If all 3 seeds germinate (grow) you will need to take your fingernails and "pinch off" the plants you want to remove. Pinching the stalks of the plants will cut off the top of the plant and kill the seedlings you don't want. If you were pull out the extra seedlings this would damage the roots of the seedling(s) you wanted to keep because all the roots are inter-wound.
12. The seeds can be pressed into any small hole you create in the center rock wool cube but one hole has been provided for you already. After putting a seed in each hole you create gently pinch the rock wool to "cover" up the seed.
13. Seeds must stay moist to germinate. If seeds dry out after getting wet this can kill the seedling. Check rock wool daily to make sure it is staying moist and to see if your seedlings have started to sprout! The time to germinate/sprout can be found on your bag of seed.
14. Pour a little water or fertilizer solution on the rock wool cube to moisten it for the seeds. The black wick will bring water up from the nutrient solution to the rock wool and thus to the roots of your seeds.

15. Using the chalk provided, label your bottle with the herb type you are growing and the date you planted it (If you ordered yours with a chalk label). This way you can better estimate when that type of herb may start to germinate. You can also use a chalk marker.
16. Stabilize both halves of your herb bottle with your hands and carry to a warm but not hot location. Some seeds go by soil temperature to tell them when to germinate. A warm but not overly hot window works great. If nighttime outside temperatures are below 55° F or 7° C you will want to move the garden out of your chilly window to prevent damage to your plant.
17. Keep the rock wool moist and check your garden daily. Some wine bottle gardeners like to cover the top of their bottle with clear saranwrap to create a greenhouse like environment inside. This is great to start the seed but must be removed once the seeds grow to 1" or more tall.
18. Keep your reservoir filled using your fertilizer solution and watch as your plant sends roots through the rock wool, through the clay pebbles then even down the neck of the bottle into the reservoir!
19. You may harvest fresh herbs for months and months. When your plant has given its last harvest just take your bottle apart and wash each component. The rock wool and perhaps the wick may need to be replaced but the rest of your wine bottle garden is reusable. Be green and use it again and again. You can find refill kits on my website [lookingsharpactus.com](http://lookingsharpactus.com) and can re-plant with my seeds or with any garden variety. If you haven't been successful with one herb type I would suggest trying another type of herb, or perhaps an herb with a faster germination (sprout) time than the herb you selected.
20. If you selected an herb like rosemary that takes a LONG time to germinate (sprout) **you can get your hydroponic garden up and running quickly by planting with a live herb and not with seeds.** To do this: 1) Purchase a small herb from a nursery or store like Home Depot or Lowes. 2) Use your hose on low to gently wash away as much soil as you can from the roots. You want to be left with just roots. 3) Take the rock wool cube, wick and hydroponic pebbles out of your kit. 4) You won't need the rock wool cube if you are adding a live plant. Pull out the wick from the cube. Tie the wick somewhat loosely around the bundle of roots leaving a long piece of wick hanging off. The wick has to be long enough to reach the bottle of the bottle. 5) Put the two parts of the bottle back together with the mouth of the bottle down into the bottom of the wine bottle. 6) Drop the wick end through the bottle neck as you lower the plant and its roots into the top of the hydroponic planter. Again make sure the wick reaches into the water. No wick = no water to your plant. 7) Hold the plant up with one hand. With your other hand add the clay pebbles around the plant to stabilize it. You can use a pencil to work pebbles gently into place. 8) Add the already mixed fertilizer solution from your jug into the bottom of your bottle. Fill 1 inch from the top with the fertilizer water. 9) Place in a sunny window with BRIGHT filtered light. Enjoy!
21. Your garden was handmade by me and I want you to love it as much as I do! I'm a former science and agriculture teacher now busy taking care of my little ones. If you have a question about your new garden you can email me at [lookingsharpactus@gmail.com](mailto:lookingsharpactus@gmail.com)

You can also find more of my handcrafted herb, cactus, succulents and even air plant items on my website. [lookingsharpactus.com](http://lookingsharpactus.com)

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