

# How To



## Create a Rainforest Terrarium

Make a mini tropical rainforest. Rainforests are known for their abundant rain (over 200 inches each year) and recycle it by constantly releasing water back into the air. Thus, water moves farther inland than it would without the trees. The sun is necessary to help the abundant plant life grow and thrive, even though there is little light on the floor of a rainforest. The trees and soil also act as a filtering system, keeping the entire system clean. By creating your own mini-rainforest, you will be able to see all of these parts at work together to create a healthy system.

### Supplies:

- clear container with seal (e.g., soda bottle, fish tank with cover, plastic container)
- dirt and sand
- assorted tropical houseplants
- teaspoon for digging
- miscellaneous rocks or other decorations
- water

### Here's what to do:

Fill your clear container with a few inches of sand and cover with a thin layer of dirt to create your soil. Then, plant tropical plants such as ferns, miniature begonias, African violets, or false aralia – make sure the plants all need the same amount of light. Be sure to leave room for them to grow. Add a decorative rock or other decoration. Water it until the soil is moist but not soggy and seal the top. Put the container in a window that's not too sunny or hot. Watch how it waters itself! If you don't see any water drops form, add some more water. If mold forms, remove the cover to dry out a bit. You should only have to water about 1x a month!

### Did you know?

Tropical rainforests cover 6% of the earth's surface but contain over half of the earth's species. Share some information on why it is important to protect the world's the rainforests. This is a great chance to let other students know what is happening and to get them involved!

For more information:

- [http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/enabling\\_garden/2495](http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/enabling_garden/2495) - soda bottle terrariums
- <http://www.artmakers.com/terrcare.html> - the magic terrarium
- <http://www.gss.ubc.ca/LTS/docs/RainforestTerrarium.doc> - rainforest terrarium

