



Building Terrariums

Welcome bug home architects! This week we are going to talk about how to build a terrarium that can host all kinds of fun creatures for you to observe and get to know.

This activity guide consists of the following parts:

1. Main Activity (pages 1-2)

Instructions on how to do the main activity in the video

2. Extras Ideas and Resources (pages 2-3)

If you like building your terrarium and filling it with fun bug buddies, there are **extra activities and challenges** you can try!

Main Activity: Building a Terrarium

1. Find a plastic container with a clear lid, that you can use with permission from your resident adult. If you can't find a plastic container with a matching lid no worries! You could also cover your plastic container with plastic wrap as well.
2. With the help of your resident adult, use a utility knife, screwdriver, or pair of scissors to carefully put small holes in the lid of your container. (this will make sure your resident critters will be able to get plenty of fresh air) Head outside and fill your container with materials like:

- dirt
- grass
- leaves
- small rocks





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3. Once you have all of your natural materials organized inside your container, spray a little bit of water on them so your visiting critters have a bit of moisture during their stay. Your terrarium should be wet, but not soaking wet.
4. Your terrarium is now ready for hosting duties! Go out and find small critters that you can catch and can stay in your terrarium. When you're ready to observe the awesome creatures you have found, put your terrarium in a shady spot so that your visitors don't get too hot. Make sure your new-found friend's stay doesn't extend past 24 hours. (Terrariums are excellent vacation homes but aren't a good substitute for animals' natural homes outside.)

Challenges

Here are some fun additional activities you can try with your terrarium!

Challenge 1: Identify your Terrarium Visitors

Use this [Bug ID sheet](#) and see if you can identify all the different creatures you have visiting in your terrarium.

Challenge 2: Be a Critter Scientist

Get to know your visiting critters better by observing their behaviors. Use your nature journal to write down all the interesting things they do while hanging out in your terrarium. See if you can answer questions like: Do your critters come out and investigate? Which ones hide and which ones explore?

Challenge 3: Map Your Terrarium

Use your nature journal to make a map of the landscape you've created in your terrarium! You could mark things on your map like where your visitors like to hide.



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Extras

Wanna learn more about terrariums? Here are some great resources you can explore!

Life-Size Terrarium- A terrarium is a small temporary habitat with all the habitat needs for a short stay from your bug visitors. Learn about a huge, human-sized terrarium called “Biosphere 2” in the Arizona Desert. You can take a tour and learn more about it here [Biosphere 2 Virtual Tour](#)

Plants and Terrariums- Some terrariums are just for plants and they make great decorations for a room. They are easy to care for since you don't have any animals to feed. Just give your plants plenty of water and light. Check out how you can make your very own plant terrarium here [Terrarium Mini Gardens](#)