

A GUIDE TO

# WINTER GARDENING



Created by Apprentices from the R.G. Shaw Citizen Schools program, Fall 2001.

**CITIZEN  
SCHOOLS**

## A GUIDE TO WINTER GARDENING

We are the Gardening Apprenticeship from the R.G. Shaw Citizen Schools Campus. Over ten weeks, we grew flowers and plants and created this guide. This is a guide to making a winter garden. This guide will show you how to grow beautiful flowers and plants, even when it is cold outside.

Plants are nice in the winter because they brighten houses and help to clean the air when it is too cold to open windows. They make the winter less dull. When they are covered with snow outside, they look nice too!

In the winter, the flowers at your local florist are grown all over the world. They come from Miami, Australia, Chile, California and Holland. At the florist Kabloom, there are over 30 types of plants and over 40 types of fresh-cut flowers in the winter.

There are some plants that grow well right here in the winter. Some types of plants that work well in the winter are bulbs like Amaryllis and Narcissus (paperwhites), and plants like Ivy. Over several weeks, we made pots, then planted Ivy, Amaryllis and Narcissus (paperwhites) to see how they worked. We made this guide along the way to make it easier for other people to make a winter garden. Enjoy!

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## WHY WE LIKE PLANTS AND FLOWERS

**Here are some of the reasons we like plants and flowers:**

- ❖ They are green!
- ❖ They make the world look good!
- ❖ They give us food and oxygen
- ❖ They can feed us, like carrots and cabbages.
- ❖ They calm you down when you're mad
- ❖ They smell good
- ❖ They provide 70% of the Earth's oxygen, without plants no one would be alive
- ❖ They make things colorful

**To us, plants symbolize:**

- ❖ The earth and the process of growing
- ❖ Peace
- ❖ Beauty
- ❖ Happiness
- ❖ Culture

**As part of our apprenticeship, we visited Karen Chu, the florist at Kabloom in West Roxbury, she said:** "I like being a florist because it is simple and pleasing. You are able to talk to the plants and flowers and they won't talk back ... I also like to make the customers smile."

**Our favorite flowers are roses, carnations, marigolds, and tulips:**



**Apprentice with a Rose**



**Apprentice with Marigold**



**Apprentice w/ Carnation**

## MATERIALS

**You will need the following materials to make a winter garden of Ivy, Amaryllis and Narcissus:**

### **1. Pots**

You will need two kinds of pots. For the Ivy, you will need a pot with a drainage hole. For the Amaryllis and Narcissus (paperwhite), you do not need a pot with a drainage hole.

You can purchase a pot, or make one yourself. On the next page, we'll show you how.

### **2. Pebbles**

Collect pebbles that are 3 cm or less. We collected pebbles in the schoolyard. Collect fine, medium and large pebbles:

Fine pebbles: smallest, 1 cm or less

Medium pebbles: in between 1cm and 2cm

Large pebbles: in between 2cm and 3cm

### **3. Soil**

### **4. Bulbs**

We used Amaryllis and Narcissus (paperwhite) bulbs.

### **5. Ivy plant**

Purchase or borrow an Ivy plant.

### **6. Plastic cups**

### **7. Tape or string**

### **8. Scissors**

### **9. Lots of water!**

## HOW TO MAKE A POT

### Steps:

1. Buy clay that you can mold by hand to create your pot. Be sure to note that some clay cannot be filled with water or used outdoors. If you use this clay, you must line it with plastic before you fill it with water. We used gray stone clay.
2. Spread some newspaper on a flat table or desk, making pots can be messy!
3. Build up and mold the sides of the pot until the sides are at least 4 inches high.
4. Set to dry

### Techniques for shaping pots:

1. Create a base out of a circle or square of clay, then use blocked pieces to build up the sides.
2. Make spiral ropes out of the clay and stack them up
3. Take a block of clay and pinch it until the center is depressed

### What happens when you put water on the clay?

It turns slippery and mushy. It also softens and smoothes out.

**What worked:** Making the pots deep enough and wide enough, making thick walls with no holes. Smoothing surfaces with a little water.

**What didn't work:** Making a pot with holes in the walls, making the walls too thin, making the bottom too wide, and making the walls of different thickness. Once the pot is dry, you cannot add clay, it will not stick.



First, roll a coil



Then stack them up



Finally, a finished pot!

## NARCISSUS (PAPERWHITES)



### How to plant Narcissus bulbs

1. Get a pot with no drainage.
2. Collect fine, medium and large pebbles.
3. Put in a few of the medium and large pebbles.
4. Put the bulbs in with the stem up and roots down. The bulb looks like a little onion! Make sure they are evenly spaced in the pot. If you put them upside down, they won't grow!
5. Put the finer rocks on the top until they are three-quarters covered.
6. Add water.
7. Place pot on a sunny windowsill or table. The Narcissus will take 4 – 5 weeks to bloom.

**Note:** When they grow, the flowers will tilt toward the sun. Rotate the plant every few days so that it will grow up straight.

**Where to find them:** You can find Narcissus bulbs at a gardening store like Mahoney's.

**Cost:** approximately \$0.99 apiece

# AMARYLLIS



## How to plant an Amaryllis Bulbs

1. Get a pot.
2. Collect fine, medium and large pebbles.
3. Put in a few of the medium and large pebbles.
4. Put the bulb in with the stem up and roots down. The bulb is large, only place one bulb in each pot. Put the finer rocks on the top until the bulb is three-quarters covered.
5. Add water.
6. Place pot on a sunny windowsill or table.

**Note:** The Amaryllis bulb can also be planted in soil in a pot with drainage.

**Where to find them:** You can find these bulbs at a gardening store, and sometimes at your local supermarket. Amaryllis bulbs are often sold as part of a kit.

**Cost:** approximately \$10.00 - \$12.00 per bulb depending on the variety. A cut stem of Amaryllis at the florist sells for \$6.99 a stem.

IVY



### How Grow An Ivy Plant from a Clipping

1. Cut a 3 – 4 inch piece of ivy off of the plant with scissors. This is called a clipping.
2. Fill a clear plastic cup with water
3. Use tape or string to attach the ivy clipping to the cup, make sure that the stem is in water
4. Place on a sunny windowsill or table until it sprouts roots, about 2-3 weeks
5. Get a pot with drainage and a dish to put it on so the water won't spill
6. Put some rocks or gravel in the bottom of the pot.
7. Fill the pot halfway with the soil
8. Water the soil until moist, stick your pinky in the soil to make sure it is moist.
9. Put in the ivy clipping with the roots down.
10. Add more soil and water lightly

**Note:** Ivy cuttings need sunlight to sprout roots. Ivy plants will last forever if taken care of.

**Where to find them:** Any florist or gardening store. Frequently also found in local supermarkets.

**Cost:** A plant costs approximately \$3.00 - \$7.00, depending on the size.



Adds soil to the pot



An ivy clipping

## HOW TO TAKE CARE OF THE PLANTS

### **Plants:**

The ivy and the bulbs we grew only need to be watered once a week. Don't forget to talk to them! Plants like the carbon dioxide!

**Note:** If you over water a plant, the tips of the leaves will turn yellow. If you under water a plant, the tips will turn brown.

### **Cut flowers:**

Keep them in a cold place until you are ready to display them. The cold air keeps them fresh and alive. At the flower shop Kabloom, cut flowers are kept at 40 degrees! Cut the stems 1 inch every 2 days so that they can soak up water more easily. Change the water every few days. They should last about 1 week.

**Note:** Amaryllis should always be kept at room temperature. They will die in cold air.

## NICE THINGS TO DO WITH FLOWERS

### **We decided to give our plants to local firefighters because:**

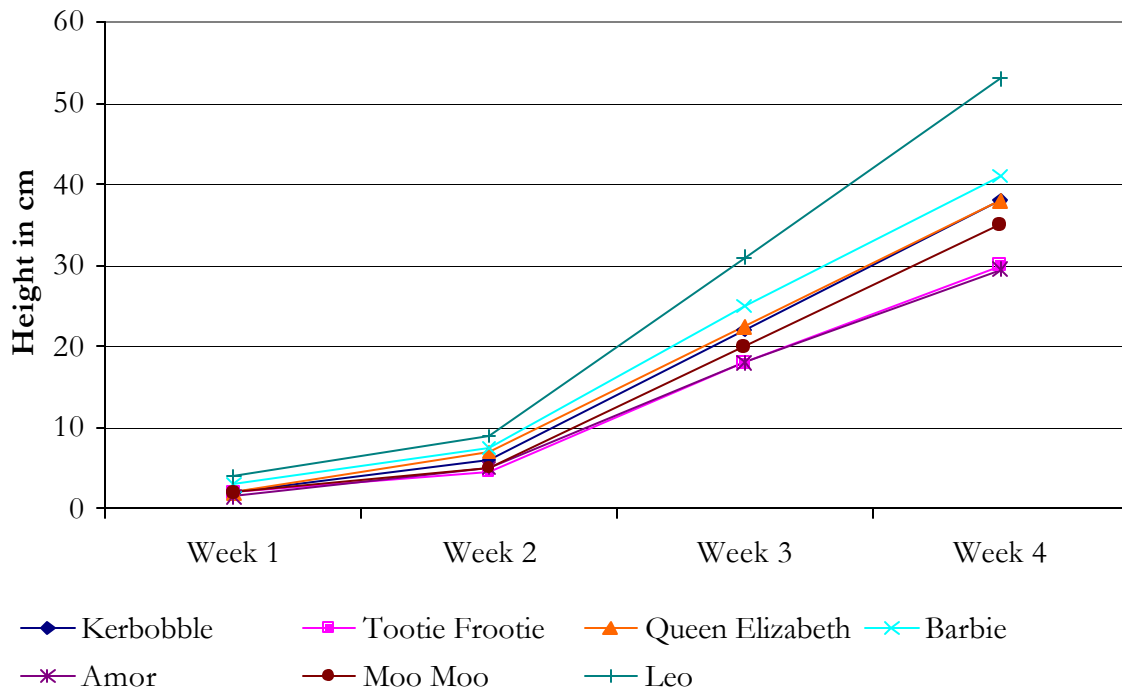
- ❖ They would be good at watering the plants with their hoses and they risk their lives.
- ❖ To be nice because of the accident on September 11<sup>th</sup> they helped and we should thank them
- ❖ When they catch on fire, they can put them out.
- ❖ The green of the plants might go well with the red of their station especially for Christmas time.

### **Some other ideas we thought of are:**

- ❖ Giving plants to the elderly, a plant can always brighten a room.
- ❖ Giving a plant to someone in your family, they make a great Mother's Day gift!

## BULB GROWTH CHARTS

Name	Gardener	Type of Bulbs	Height			
			Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Kerbobble	Darrin	Paper White	2 cm	6 cm	22 cm	38 cm
Tootie Frootie	Michael	Paper White	2 cm	4.5 cm	18 cm	30 cm
Queen Elizabeth	Elizabeth	Paper White	2 cm	7 cm	22.5 cm	38 cm
Barbie	Sabine	Paper White	3 cm	7.5 cm	25 cm	41 cm – bloom
Amor	Tim	Amaryllis	1.5 cm	5 cm	18 cm	29.5 cm
Moo Moo	Christina	Paper White	2 cm	5 cm	20 cm	35 cm
Leo	Darius	Paper White	4 cm	9 cm	31 cm	53 cm - bloom



As these charts show, the bulbs will grow slowly at first. Then they will shoot up very quickly in the middle of the second week. Expect blooms between the fourth and fifth weeks.

*Special thanks to:*

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**Boston Fire Department, West Roxbury E30, L25**



**This guide was written by middle school students in the Citizen Schools after school program. Citizen Schools is revolutionizing how children spend their out-of-school time -- through fun, challenging, hands-on "apprenticeships" that unite volunteer Citizen Teachers and small groups of children, ages 9 to 14. Children come away with a deep understanding of the subject and with practical skills they can use for life. Each apprenticeship also ends in a Wow -- a high-quality product or performance, like this guide!**