

# GARDENING ACTIVITIES

## MAKE YOUR OWN RAIN GAUGE IN SIX EASY STEPS



### Step 1: Get Your Rain Boots and Grab Your Materials!

You will need a glass jar, a plastic ruler and tape.

### Step 2: Location

Find a good location for your rain gauge outside. Make sure it's a safe place where it will be undisturbed. If you'd like to compare rainfall at different locations, such as home and school, you can make more than one rain gauge.

### Step 3: The Gauge

Place your ruler inside your empty jar, with the numbers facing out. Make sure the end of the ruler rests on the bottom of the jar and it stands straight up and down. Use tape to hold in place, if needed.

### Step 4: Collect and Record

Place your rain gauge outside where it will collect water and begin recording your measurements. Plan to measure rain for an entire month. Check your gauge each day and record the amount of rain to the nearest tenth of an inch. Add up your measurements at the end of the month. This is great practice for adding fractions!

### Step 5: Challenge Yourself

To challenge yourself, you can calculate average rainfall per week. Take your total rainfall and divide by the number of weeks you collected information.

### Step 6: Clean Up

Be sure to clean up your area and put all supplies back where you found them.

Information is courtesy of American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture.





## Step 1: Get Your Gloves and Grab Your Supplies!

You will need a clear plastic glove\*, cotton balls (5-10), seeds (5-10), ribbon, single hole punch/scissors, tape and water.

\*Note: do not use a stretchy, latex medical glove; instead, use a loose fitting, thin, food-service grade glove

## Step 2: Preparation

Take the plastic glove and spread it out flat. There are five fingers, which means you have five growing areas for your seeds.

## Step 3: Ribbon Hanger

Using a single hole punch or scissors, make 4-6 holes around the top of the glove, about an inch for the edge. Lace your ribbon through these holes and leave about a 6" tail on the end. You'll use the tail to hang your glove window box.

## Step 4: Preparing the Growing Area

Place 1 or 2 cotton balls in each finger of the glove and push all the way to the fingertip. Be sure the cotton balls fully cover the tips of the fingers.

## Step 5: Planting

Carefully place 1 or 2 seeds (depending on size) in each fingertip, between the glove and the cotton ball

## Step 6: Water

Add just enough water to each fingertip to make the cotton balls damp

## Step 7: Hang it Up

Carefully tie the ends of your ribbon into a knot. Don't pull the ribbons tight, because you'll need the top open for watering. With adult permission, use a few pieces of tape to hang your glove window box in a sunny window from this ribbon.

## Step 8: Check In

Check your glove daily. You always want your cotton balls damp, but not soaking wet.

## Step 9: Clean Up

Be sure to clean up your area and put all supplies back where you found them.

## Step 10: Watch Your Seeds Grow

Watch your seeds grow! You get to be the farmer, as you watch the lifecycle of a plant unfold before your very eyes.

Information is courtesy of American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture.



## Step One: Create Your Compost Bin

Buy or make a bin at least 3'x3'x3' or larger. Make sure the bin has an open bottom to provide the compost direct contact with the earth.

## Step Two: Create the Foundation

Start with a layer of straw or twigs (the smaller the pieces, the better).

## Step Three: Begin Adding “Ingredients”

Pile on veggie/fruit waste from the kitchen, grass from the yard, even newspapers, shredded cardboard, weeds, flowers, etc.

## Step Four: Get the Right Balance of Carbon and Nitrogen

Make sure you have a carbon/nitrogen ratio that is 3 parts carbon, 1 part nitrogen.

- Examples of carbon (brown compost) include: wood, bark, shredded cardboard, corn stalks, pine needles, grass, leaves, shredded newspaper, sawdust, even dryer lint!
- Examples of nitrogen (green compost) include flowers, garden or kitchen waste, coffee grounds, weeds, seaweed, hedge clippings, manures, veggie scraps and grass clippings.

## Step Five: Water

Water, about once weekly—just enough to moisten the compost so that the microbes that feed on the waste can survive—but not so much that your pile becomes slimy.

## Step Six: Aerate

Expose your compost to the air by turning every few days to allow oxygen to get to all of the compost and help break down the waste. Earthworms will also help the decomposition process. To find out more about vermicomposting (using worms in your compost) follow the links on our website, [www.kyproud.com/readyssetgrow](http://www.kyproud.com/readyssetgrow).

## Step Seven: Control Moisture

Put a lid on your compost to control the level of moisture.

## Step Eight: Maintain Your Compost

Every time you add kitchen waste, cover it with a pile of leaves or grass to ward off pesky flies and foul odors.

## Step Nine: Testing Your Compost

It could take anywhere from three months to one year for the compost to be complete. How do you know when it is done? When you test it, the soil should be dark, soft and crumbly, not fibrous. Also, it should have a slightly sweet, earthy smell. If it is fibrous, close the lid and just wait longer.

Use your compost for potting or gardening and it will greatly enrich the soil and the growth of whatever you choose to grow. If you don't want to grow anything, you have at least reduced your garbage waste by 50-70% and enriched the soil in your yard.

Information courtesy of UK Extension.