DIY Terrariums

https://www.buzzfeed.com/peggy/21-easy-ideas-for-adorable-diy-terrariums

Assemble supplies.

1. **Glass jar or container** with a lid and thin walls or sides: The thin sides allow you to look in at your terrarium better.

Find a container that’s large enough to allow ferns to grow and still leave a small amount of space at the top and sides.

Find a container with a large mouth so you can stick your hand in it to build your terrarium—although you could also use smaller-mouth jars and chopsticks to make miniature terrariums.

2. **Pebbles or grit:** This will serve as your water drainage at the bottom of the terrarium. Typically put in about a 1/2 to 1 full inch of pebbles or traction grit.

3. **Activated charcoal** This cleans and purifies the water you add to the terrarium. You cannot use charcoal briquets like you use in a cooking grill. Put a thin layer over the gravel: about 1/4 cup.

4. **Potting soil:** Use seed starting soil, which is semi-sterile. Do not use soil from your garden or backyard, because it has microscopic bugs and molds that can ruin your terrarium. Put the soil in
the terrarium in small hills to make it look like a real forest floor. Make the hills about 1 to 3 inches deep.

5. **Moss**: This is the figurehead of your terrarium operation. You can use pretty much any type of moss you can find, but do not use mosses that self-compost, such as sphagnum mosses: the easy way to spot these is to look on the bottom of the moss for any dead leaves or other dead things that are composting instead of roots. I look for moss in my backyard, under pine trees, and on wet spaces in the ground. Don't collect from the wild.

5. **Ferns**: Look for small ferns that are slow growers and that won’t grow out of the top of the terrarium.

**The Basics:**

**Step 1:** Cover the bottom with half an inch to one inch-thick layer of pebbles, gravel or rocks to create a false drainage system for the plant roots.

**Step 2:** Add a thin layer, ¼ cup, of activated charcoal keeps the water fresh, and prevent mold and bacteria from building up.

**Step 3:** Add a layer of potting soil 1 to 3 inches deep, making a hill-like shape. They also make a special mix if you choose to use cacti and succulents instead of moss and ferns.

**Step 4:** Place plants in the terrarium, starting with the largest plant first.

**Step 5:** Water the roots of the plants and add lid.

**Step 6:** Find a good place for your terrarium.

**Terrarium Placement and Care:**

Place your terrarium in indirect or filtered sunlight. If it’s in a full sunlight, it will grow too fast and/or bake. Think about the real forest and the light there: This will help you in finding a good place for your terrarium to grow. They do need some light.

Cycles of condensation and evaporation are normal inside your terrarium as it warms up during the day and cools during the night. If there’s too much condensation, though, take the lid off for an hour or a little less, but you have to make certain to put it back on or the terrarium will quickly dry out and die.

Water terrariums about once every three months with an eyedropper, that’s all the water it needs! Don’t put much water in—just a little bit. You will know if it needs water if the terrarium looks or smells dry.