

Build a Mason Jar Ecosystem

Age Range: 9+

Skills/Subjects:

- Gardening
- Science
- Art Design
- Recycling

Materials:

- Mason Jar
- Clean sand or gravel
- Activated terrarium charcoal
- Soil
- Plants
- Decorative Items (i.e.: rocks, moss, small pine cones, etc.)
- Water



Directions

- Add a layer of about 1 to 2 inches of clean sand or gravel to the bottom of the jar to create a drainage layer and water basin for any excess water.
- Add a thin layer of about ½ inch of activated charcoal on top of the sand to act as a filter to keep your ecosystem nice and clean.
- Add a layer of about 2 to 4 inches of good draining soil.
- Add a couple of decorative items like a rock, small pine cone or piece of wood.
- Add some plant life. Smaller, slow growing plants that can tolerate warm, humid environments work best. (optional: adding a bug or two, like crickets, beetles, worms and ladybugs, will provide CO₂ for your plants).
- Give your ecosystem enough water so that the sand layer is fairly saturated. You won't actually need very much water to achieve this so be careful when adding the water.
- Place the cap on your mini-ecosystem then place it near a window (not in direct sunlight) and watch it self-regulate.