

Seed Starting on a Budget Series: DIY Containers



No rule says that seed starting requires fancy flats or trays. For the frugal gardener, spending money on pots and containers is a definite no-no. The smallest portion of your gardening budget should be allotted to containers. Why? Because they're so easy to find for free or cheap! Including plenty of DIY options to consider!

Budget, Free, and DIY Container Options

When looking for items to recycle into seed starting containers choose pots that allow for appropriate drainage. You can poke holes to let water to seep through. When puncturing the container isn't possible, add rocks to the bottom, so your plant's roots don't sit in water. Consider the following when selecting container sizes. Will you be re-potting seedlings at some point? Or are you timing your

plantings so that you'll just need to transplant once into the garden?

I like to set my containers on a tray of some sort to keep accidental soil and water spills in check. I also prefer to water seedlings from below to prevent damping off. Years ago I splurged on heavy-duty seed starting trays. I expect them to last for years to come. Any tray will do. Check your kitchen cabinets for old serving trays.

- **Egg carton** – a cheap, recyclable option, but indents are relatively small
- **Chinese takeout containers** (plastic or paper) – make sure to poke holes in the bottom for drainage
- **Paper towel rolls** – sit them upright and fill with soil, small but eco-friendly option
- **Dollar store options** – pass by the dollar store in the spring and you're likely to find a few seed starting options for a steal.
- **Coffee pods** – they're tiny, but instead of chucking them in the trash you can rinse them out and add a bit of soil to start seeds
- **Yogurt or applesauce containers** – small but easy to collect if these happen to be a favorite snack in your household
- **Paper cups** – have some extra paper cups from that new year's eve party you threw? They make great seed starting containers
- **Bulk plant trays** – whenever you purchase plants for your local nursery, keep those plant packs they come in and use them to start seeds
- **Jiffy or coir pellets** – these aren't free, but they're typically low cost and super easy to use. Add a little water, and they puff up, so they're ready for seed starting. Buy in packs to save money and find a tray or use a box or larger container to keep them in.
- **Clamshells** – strawberries, blueberries, salad, baby

spinach, it's a shame that so much of our food requires so much plastic packaging. Use it to your advantage by repurposing the clamshells as trays for your pellets or soil. Close the top, and voila you'll see your seed sprouting in no time!

- **Juice or milk cartons** – cut the side out of a carton and fill with soil. These provide a nice large area for starting seed

These are just a few ideas. There are no doubt plenty more. Let me know if you have a favorite budget method for starting seeds. I'd love to hear it! Leave a comment below.

Still Thinking of Buying Speciality Trays and Flats?

If you want to spend extra money on this type of equipment, that's fine. I do suggest, though, that you make sure you're buying the highest quality containers that you can afford. That way, you can reuse them each year.

Regardless of the container you go with, if you pick something that's being repurposed or reused, just be sure to sanitize it.

Seed Starting on a Budget Series: Inventory & Supplies



For the next few weeks, I'll be focusing on the topic of seed starting. I'll be providing you with budget-friendly tips, hints, and strategies to get you started this gardening season without breaking the bank. This week, let's talk about inventory and seed starting supplies.

Inventory

Every year I have a mini panic about the stuff I'll need to purchase to get through the seed starting period. And then I quickly realize I already have plenty on hand from years prior. Carefully taking inventory is how I avoid overspending on seed and supply orders. Here's what I ask myself:

- Do I have enough seed trays and pots?
- Are there any seeds I need to buy? Which ones?
- How many plants of each type will I grow? I suggest referring to any [plans](#) you've drawn up during the winter months.
- How many bags of soil mix do I need?
- What do I have on hand that I can re-use?

Guestimating is your enemy. Guessing how many pots or soil mix I need is a recipe for overspending. Knowing the exact numbers will save you from wrecking your budget.

Buying Supplies

Before you start clicking around online to purchase seed and supplies, have a budget in mind. I typically set mine to no more than \$50.

The three most important tools required for seed starting are:

- Seed starting soil mix
- Seeds
- Containers

Through seed saving, you can drastically reduce your spending on seeds, but sometimes it's fun to try new varieties. A tip for saving money if you're buying seeds: buy them with a friend or two to save on shipping costs. Often, packets include way more seed than most gardeners would use in a single season. Pair up with another gardening pal so you can share and split the cost.

Each year I [re-use](#) my seed starting flats and containers. The number one rule? Make sure to sanitize! Otherwise, you might end up with a whole tray of dead seedlings. Use found and recycled containers to save money. Only buy new containers and flats if current ones are totally broken and unsuitable for planting.

Soil mix is where I don't skimp. I buy the best mix I can afford as long as it fits into my set budget. Buy larger bags of soil mix to save cash. If buying online, keep a close eye on shipping costs. Some companies may charge extra fees for shipping bulky items. Don't substitute bags of earth or potting soil for seed starting mix. Before buying, figure out how much soil you'll need to fill your trays and containers. Remember, you can always buy more seed starting mix if you

need it.

Start Small

You don't need to start with an intense operation all at once. Start small and increase your seedling production each year. I started off starting seedlings under a small grow light in a single tray. Today, I have a homemade shelving system equipped with adjustable grow lights. I hope to add a shelf next year, but I'm in no rush. Be patient and purchase supplies when they're on sale. As time progresses, you'll find yourself more well-equipped than ever.

An Organized Pantry Makes All the Difference for the Frugal Gardener



A peek into my pantry. This is the section where I store beans, grains, and pasta.

You're probably wondering why I'm talking about pantry organizing. Aren't we here to talk about gardening? Of course, but being a successful frugal gardener takes more than just popping some seeds into a clump of dirt. I approach gardening much like I do my health. A holistic strategy is required for best results. Everything has an impact on my gardening, including my pantry (and fridge) organization. If everything is in disorder and I don't know where essential ingredients are, it becomes difficult to make use of what I'm harvesting in the garden. If my pantry is a mess, I don't know what I need to replace, which may potentially lead to unwanted

spending at the grocery store.

Get it Done Now

I usually only do one big cleanup of my pantry each year. I don't have the time to do a whole bunch of mini cleanups. I also typically do it in the winter time. Why? Because it gets things ready for the spring when all my energy is focused on prepping the garden. It's one less thing to think about.

Tips for Organizing

Whether you have a tiny cupboard or a walk-in pantry for all your dry goods, you can organize things in a way that makes sense for your lifestyle. Where there's a will, there's a way!

- **Start small.** It's tempting to try to tackle organizing things all at once, but it can be discouraging if you don't have the budget to buy expensive food storage containers in large quantities. Start with one shelf at a time.
- **Not everything needs to match.** I've seen the photos on Pinterest. Pantries with perfectly matched containers, everything perfectly lined up. It looks great, but it's not realistic especially if you're on a budget.
- **Label, label, label.** Label the things that need to be labeled. For instance, different types of rice need to be labeled. Pasta does not (you can identify it at a glance). I bought inexpensive chalkboard labels from Amazon so that I can erase and re-label at will.
- **Head to the dollar store and look for sales.** As long as containers are airtight, they're fine for food storage. I purchased most of my storage containers at IKEA during their storage sale events.
- **Organize by shelf.** If your pantry has multiple levels, designate each shelf for a type of food. In my pantry, I have one shelf for snacks and nuts, another is for canned goods and spices, and one for legumes, grains,

and pasta. The bottom shelf includes everything else.

- **Take everything out.** Remove everything when you're ready to get started on a big cleanup project. Have all the containers you need? Labels at the ready? Get everything out of there before you start organizing. You'll be able to visualize everything a lot better.
- **Disinfect.** Wipe down shelves and all surfaces so everything is spic and span.
- **Buy clear jars and containers.** You'll be able to see when it's time to replenish lentils and grains with a simple glance.
- **Containers over boxes.** I've always tried to have a neat pantry. Even when I purchased boxed goods like pasta or grains, I'd find a way to store everything neatly. The problem was, it still looked overwhelming and cluttered. Containers and jars lessen the visual clutter and make opening the pantry a lot nicer than before.
- **Extra containers.** Get an extra jar or container, so there's always a place to put newly purchased dry goods. Use them in rotation to store the stuff you don't buy often.

Have any questions about pantry organization? Let me know by leaving a comment. I'm no Marie Kondo, but I sure do love when things have their place, and clutter is kept to a minimum!

Winter Food Budgeting for the Frugal Gardener



In the past, I always noticed a jump in our food budget over the winter months. You'd think that the summer with its frequent BBQs and outdoor game nights would put a more significant dent in the budget, but I've noticed the opposite.

In the summer, we get a lot of food right from the garden. Fresh greens, squash, and beans all make up a large portion of our dinner plates. Produce is in season, too, so even when we visit the grocery store, farmer's market, or sign up for a CSA, we're not overpaying. In the winter, the cost of fresh produce at the grocery store increases and without cold frames (here's hoping we can manage to build some for cheap this year!) we need to get creative with our food budget.

Tips for Food Budgeting

Here are some tips that I've utilized that I've found have made a considerable dent in our food spending.

- **Make a plan.** Meal plan when you can. Carve out some time

during the week or weekend to plan for the week (or weeks) ahead.

- **Write down staple dishes.** I use a Google Sheet to write down regular dishes that can be customized depending on the ingredients we have on hand. Each entry is numbered so when meal planning, I use a random number generator and the picking is done for me. It helps with decision fatigue. Examples: tacos, protein salad, soup, etc.
- **Stock your pantry.** Having a well-stocked pantry before the winter months will help immensely. You won't have to spend on new spices or other staples.
- **Keep your pantry and fridge organized.** You'll waste less if you can see everything that you have on hand. Use clear containers in your pantry so you can easily spot what's running low. Being able to view your pantry's contents will help with meal planning, too.
- **Buy meat on sale.** If you are a meat eater, buy extra when it's on sale and freeze in portions.
- **Have a backup plan.** I have chronic migraines. So sometimes, I'm entirely out of commission. I can't get up from my dark cocoon let alone chop up veggies for dinner. On those days, it becomes tempting to order out. I try to budget for these instances. Another alternative is to have easy to make stuff on hand that's for these special moments. Frozen pizza, canned soup, etc.
- **Do what works for you.** I like to meal plan, but I hate meal prepping. So I don't ever waste time prepping weekly portions of food. I've tried it, and it just isn't my cup of tea. Do you prefer to shop weekly? Bi-weekly? Monthly with mini trips for staples like milk? Go with what you prefer. If you do something you don't like doing, you're likely to ditch it and end up impulse spending at some point.
- **Set aside money for groceries.** Or use a budgeting app to keep track. Whatever your method, make sure you're sticking to your budget and make a note of why you didn't if you end up going over.

- **Plan for events.** Around the holidays, we always end up spending extra when hosting friends and family. That's fine. We just make sure to keep it in check and spend less earlier in the month.
- **Sign up for a CSA Basket.** CSA stands for Community supported agriculture and it's a wonderful way to support your local farmers. It also provides you with access to fresh locally grown produce. In my experience, signing up for a CSA has always been a great deal. We always end up with plenty more than we expected. This year, we were lucky enough to be involved with a winter CSA, and it's been a delight. Many farms are also more than willing to work with individuals on a tighter budget.

What are some of your must-follow food budgeting tips? I'd love to hear them. This weekend I'll hopefully be carving out some time to re-organize my pantry. I'm hoping the finished project will be worth posting about, so stay tuned for that. I'll be talking about how I organize my pantry, my must-have items, and where to find the best deals on organization tools for the pantry.

Garden Planning: Crop Rotation



I've said it before. It's so important for a frugal gardener to plan. While gardeners without a strict budget can afford to be a little lax when it comes to planning, those who are looking to save money, in the long run, need to be meticulous and start thinking about their garden layout months, even years in advance. It sounds overwhelming, but taking a bit of time to sketch it all out will save you from a headache later on.

Today, I want to talk a bit about crop rotation. It's not often the first thing a gardener thinks about when drawing out plans for spring plantings. It's even less on the mind of the gardener with little space to spare. I know plenty of gardeners who have a permanent spot for certain vegetables. The tomato patch goes here. The beans remain here, year after year.

Unfortunately, relegating plants to the same area for each new gardening season is the perfect way to encourage pests, disease, and deficiency problems. If you're wondering why your plants seem to be providing diminishing returns years down the road, a lack of rotation may be the answer.

How to Plan for Crop Rotation

The easiest way to ensure crops are rotated correctly is to arrange plantings according to vegetable families. Planting in family groupings makes it easier to handle pests, too.

Write everything down. Whether you're planning or planting, make a note of what's going where. It's easy to miss this step and forget about marking down what you're planting, but if you don't note it somewhere, you're unlikely to remember a year or two down the road. Once you've planted a specific vegetable family in a spot, you shouldn't plant it again in that bed for a minimum of three years.

How I Plan Out Crop Rotation

I arrange my four main raised garden beds into the four following families: brassicas (cabbage, kale, etc.), nightshades (tomatoes, peppers, eggplant), greens from the sunflower family & spinach relatives, and finally curcubits. I have a few other spots in my garden that act as miscellaneous areas where I can rotate out families or plant random stuff. This year, I actually plan to rotate my curcubit patch to one of those 'empty' beds so that I can grow a second bed of brassicas in my main garden area.

Here's an example of how I plan for crop rotation.

Last year my four main beds looked like this:

- **Bed 1:** Potatoes
- **Bed 2:** Kale & Collards (the rest of my brassicas were in one of the miscellaneous beds)
- **Bed 3:** Tomatoes, Peppers, Eggplant
- **Bed 4:** Squash

Plan for this year:

- **Bed 1:** Brassicas

- **Bed 2:** Tomatoes, Peppers, Eggplant
- **Bed 3:** Brassicas
- **Bed 4:** Greens (lettuce, spinach, etc.)
- In my two spare beds, I'll be putting squash and root veggies (carrots, beets, onions)

Next Year:

- **Bed 1:** Beets, Carrots, Onions
- **Bed 2:** Squash
- **Bed 3:** Greens
- **Bed 4:** Tomatoes, Peppers, Eggplant

Final Tip

When in doubt about what you've planted before in one spot, plant beans or some other non-demanding crop.

Planning is important, but don't take things so seriously that gardening becomes a chore. If you make a mistake, brush it off and make a note for next time.

If you're not sure about which plant belongs to which family check out this resource:

<https://extension.psu.edu/plant-rotation-in-the-garden-based-on-plant-families>

Frugal Family Activity: Snow Cake



The forecast is calling for heavy precipitation in the next few days, right in time for the new year. Most of us are still in vacation mode and parents with children are probably wondering how they'll entertain their children while school is still out. Unfortunately, the cold means there's no garden to tend to, and unless you've installed cold frames and planned for a winter harvest, there's nothing to pick from the ground. On fair days when the weather has calmed, and the sun is out, it's an ideal time for outdoor activities like tobogganing, hiking, skating. What happens when the snow falls fast and fills the streets and yards to the brim, though? Some stay holed up inside with a good book. Others play games or enjoy binge-watching Netflix. On days like those, there's no opportunity to dig in the dirt. But whether you're a parent wanting to entertain the kids or an adult looking for something different to do, there is one thing you can harvest after a winter storm. Snow!

My mother was, once upon a time, a preschool teacher. She still works with children and is a true kid-at-heart. I was recently reminded of an activity she used to do with her students and one that we would do at home. When the snow was

fresh, we'd pop outside and find an undisturbed mound of the stuff and 'harvest' it for baking.

Yes. You heard that correctly. We'd bake a snow cake. The texture is dense, like a pound cake, and the taste was never really it's shining attribute. But the fact that we were baking with snow was the real spectacle. I asked my mother to share her recipe with me so I could share it with you today on this New Year's Eve. It's a fun recipe to try with kids, and it sure beats feeling bummed about the lack of warm gardening-ready weather.

Snow Cake

- 1 cup of sugar
- 1/2 cup of butter (margarine can be substituted)
- 1/2 cup of milk
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 cups of flour
- 1 cup of snow**

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350F
- Mix all ingredients until batter is smooth
- Pour into a baking pan of your choice
- Bake for 30 to 40 minutes
- Remove from oven and let cool
- Add your favorite icing

***Make sure to scoop up fresh, clean snow.*

Please feel free to share photos of your snow cake or stories of making this recipe with your kids I'd love to see and hear them.

A Frugal Side Dish Recipe for the Holidays



I wanted to share a simple, easy, inexpensive side dish recipe with you just before the holidays. I'm always disappointed how little vegetables end up on the table this time of year. We give all the glory to the main dish, but what about the humble vegetables? I think they're a particularly important part of a holiday feast. They're tasty, filling, and provide plenty of vitamins and nutrients. Packing your table and plate with lots of veg is also the perfect way to avoid a food coma. It's not just about being healthy, though. Vegetable side dishes are easy to make and don't usually cost that much. Having trouble sourcing produce that isn't pricey? Choose frozen or canned vegetables over fresh. Better yet, plan in advance and have frozen garden vegetables on hand in the freezer. You can delight your guests with fresh tasting produce grown right in

your yard!

Peas are an easy vegetable to freeze, they go well with nearly any main protein (or a tofu loaf or nut roast if you're vegetarian or vegan), and they're relatively inexpensive and super easy to find in the grocery store frozen section should you not have any garden peas on hand. We used to eat canned peas often around the holidays, but now I always cook this dish. It's extremely simple but feels fancier than plain peas from a can.

Braised Peas

Serves 4

Ingredients

- Broth (chicken or vegetable) – enough to cover the peas
- 2 cups of peas (frozen)
- Half an onion (diced)
- 1 tbsp Butter or olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

- Saute onions until translucent in a saucepan with butter or olive oil
- Add peas and broth to saucepan
- Simmer until peas are cooked through
- Add s&p to taste
- Use a slotted spoon to serve peas

Do you have any favorite vegetable side dishes that you serve when you're entertaining? I'm also fond of a good salad with a hearty meal and root vegetable mash.

Wishing you a happy holiday season!

Please let me know if there are any burning garden questions

you'd like answered in the New Year. I'm so excited to start planning out the new gardening season, and I hope you are, too!

Another Plant to Look Out for This Season: The Christmas Cactus



Last week I talked a bit about poinsettias and why they're a great plant to grab around the holiday season. This week, I thought of another easy-to-source plant that pops up around this time of year. The Christmas Cactus is a lovely tropical plant with succulent leaves and pretty flower buds that bloom right about now. Why do I recommend it? First, it's

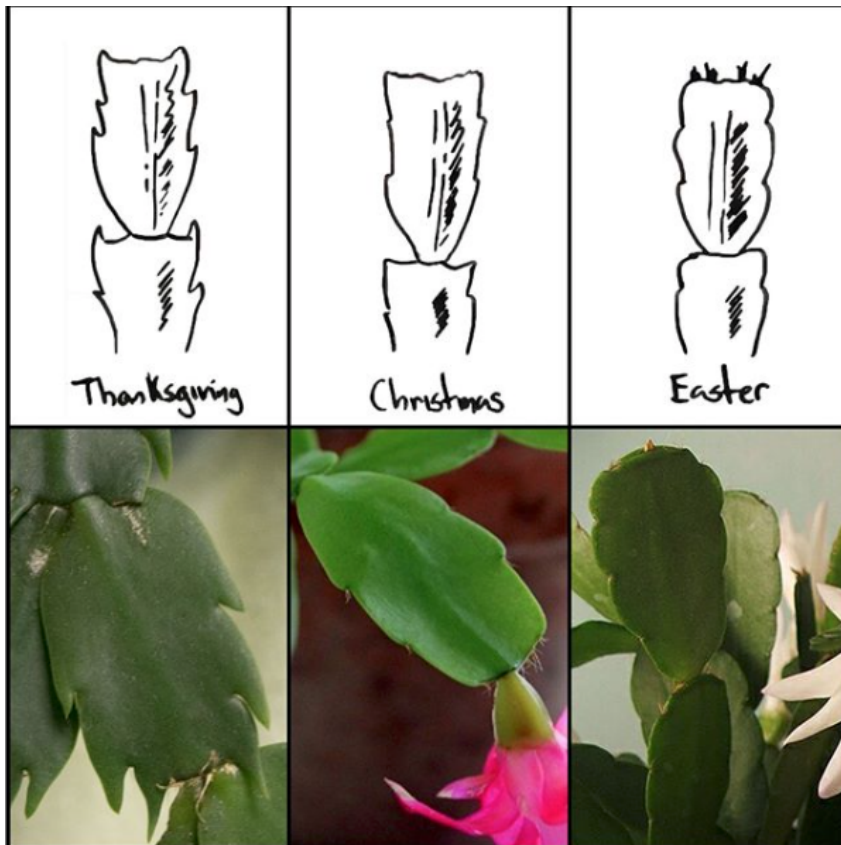
appearance. It's beautiful and exotic-looking. Next up? It's budget price tag! And for us frugal gardeners, that's the best part. During the holidays, you'll find these plants for cheap at your local nursery or supermarket. Be careful when shopping, though. Here are a few things to be on the lookout for when picking out a new plant-friend to bring home. These rules apply anytime you're buying plants, especially if they're discounted or not coming from a reputable nursery.

- **Scrutinize the leaves.** Don't purchase a plant that has browning leaves or foliage that looks unhealthy.
- **Look out for insects.** Little flies might hitch a ride to your home and infect other plants. If they're flying around the area, it might be wise to skip the purchase and seek your Christmas Cactus elsewhere.
- **Price.** Don't pay extra for fancy pots and don't let anyone rip you off. You should be able to find these for well under \$10.

Christmas Cactuses are easy to keep alive well past Christmas. A little humidity is helpful, which is why I house mine in my well-lit bathroom.

Don't Be Fooled

Did you know that Christmas Cactuses are sometimes mislabelled? It's no surprise since different holiday cactuses look very similar. The Epic Gardener recently posted a handy guide to identifying your plant.



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structure of the different types of holiday cacti. Keep in mind you will still see different looking ones, because all holiday cacti are cultivars and hybrids from the relatively few species of *Schlumbergera* and *Rhipsalidopsis* found in nature.

- Thanksgiving Cactus (*Schlumbergera truncata*): Hooked, claw-looking edges. The most common one sold at nurseries and often mislabeled as Christmas Cactus.

- Christmas Cactus (*Schlumbergera bridgesii*): Smaller, smoother appearance and counter-intuitively one of the harder ones to find.

- Easter Cactus (*Rhipsalidopsis gaertnerii*): Smooth leaves with a bristly appearance to them.



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via: Instagram

I love buying plants. I bring them home regularly, and I often find myself sticking them in my cart when I'm at the supermarket doing groceries. If you're like me, though, and don't want your plant obsession to hurt your wallet, consider picking up plants during peak holiday moments. Around Christmas, Easter and even Valentine's Day you might be able to find plants heavily discounted or for a steal. That's not always the case, of course. Around Valentine's Day, bouquet prices skyrocket. For Mother's Day, flowers fetch high prices. But if you're not in a hurry and have a good eye, it's not hard to spot plant finds in the most unexpected of places.

Don't Throw Out Your Poinsettia!



The holidays have arrived, and all I see everywhere are poinsettia plants. In fact, I've already been gifted one! It's a lovely plant that brightens up a room with a bit of cheer. I find it odd, though, that we only see these pretty plants around December. You blink, and they're gone. Every year, I seem to impress family and friends by the sheer fact that I keep my poinsettia plant alive longer than anyone else. No one I know keeps theirs past January 1st. I imagine garbage bins across town are filled with them. A graveyard of poinsettias. So, what's the trick? There isn't much of one. Just treat it like any other houseplant. Don't neglect it! I think that's the trouble. People perceive these plants as disposable and temporary, but they don't have to be. They're attractive plants and surprisingly cheap in-season. Wait a little and when all the holiday fuss has died down, and you might be able to snag one at a deep discount.

A few tips

Still skeptical about whether you'll be able to keep your poinsettia alive? Here are some pointers for nurturing your plant.

- **Poinsettias love lots of sun.** Many folks probably don't put them in an ideal location because they're not thinking about long-term survival. Make sure to choose a sunny spot for your plant.
- **Water frequently, but allow the soil to dry between waterings.** This is actually something I do unintentionally, and it works wonders. Make sure there's somewhere for water to drain, though.
- **Keep it away from cold windows and drafts.** Cool temperatures are bad for this plant. Don't stick it right by a window and avoid placing it at your home's entrance.
- **Provide it with a humid environment.** The poinsettia is a tropical plant, so it prefers humidity over dry conditions. The easiest way to provide humidity is to bring it into the bathroom while showering. If your bathroom gets sun, you can even make it a permanent home for your plant.
- **Re-pot it.** Unless you purchase a poinsettia with a large planter, you'll need to re-pot it to keep it alive since many store-bought plants are crowded into small containers.

Not even sure why you'd want to keep one alive past the new year? Maybe red doesn't fit into your regular decor. Poinsettias are available in other color variations including pink and white. I'm particularly fond of the white variety. The plant will fit in seamlessly with the rest of your houseplants. With a little bit of patience and allowing for periods of total darkness, you may even successfully re-bloom your poinsettia just in time for December 2019.

What's a Frugal Gardener to do in the Snow ?



Where I live, the snow has arrived and is here to stay. It's been a month or so, now that we've begun to shovel our walkway and donned our boots when heading outdoors. A month where I was happy to take a break from thinking about gardening tasks: I think a break is necessary for any hobby. It allows you to refresh and come back to it newly excited. But what are you do when you're ready for the break to end?

Thirty days later and I'm itching to dig in the dirt, but the ground is frozen, and it's not about to melt anytime soon. Boredom can be either a blessing or a curse. Here's how I make the most of my gardening downtime.

Take Advantage of the Rest Period

If you're in an area where winter signals the end of the season, here are some ways to keep entertained.

- **Find another hobby** – take up a new activity to spend your time when the temps drop below zero. Knitting, puzzling, reading, or browse your municipality's website to find free or low-cost gardening-related conferences to attend.
- **Scroll through Instagram** – Lucky gardeners in warmer climates are still enjoying lush, green crops. There's no shortage of inspiration and photo-entertainment on Instagram. You might even gather ideas for next year.
- **Clean** – You've heard of spring cleaning, but as a gardener, I often find myself tidying up more often in the winter so that I'm all organized when warmer weather arrives.
- **Learn something new** – Even the most seasoned gardeners can afford to educate themselves about new techniques or new plants they've never grown. Look for free online webinars or ask around to see if there are any in-person educational events in your town.
- **Gather and build** – With a bit of extra time on your hands, it's the perfect time to look around for supplies. Ask friends and family if they're throwing anything away that might be useful for your garden. Building supports and beds now will save you time in the spring.
- **Focus indoors** – Take stock of your indoor plants and make sure they're getting the attention they deserve. Consider starting an indoor garden for greens or herbs.
- **Enjoy the winter** – Stop lamenting about the end of the season! Embrace the colder weather and enjoy classic winter activities. Sledding, skating, building snowmen. Get outside, even if it's just for a walk. Get active, and you'll be primed to dig, haul, and plant in the new

year.

Whether you're still enjoying warm weather somewhere south or you're already buried in snow, think about planning your downtime from the garden. The winter doesn't have to be gloomy. Take stock of all the possibilities and use the rest period wisely. You'll come back to next year's garden fully re-charged.