

Plants from Trash

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Lots of things that we throw out in the garbage can be turned into plants! Try growing these things:

Orange, Lemon, Lime or Grapefruit seeds - Use a fresh seed, rinse it off after it comes out of the fruit and plant it about 1 / 4 to 1 / 2 inch deep. Keep the soil moist, but not too soggy and it should sprout in 1 or 2 weeks. It will take many years for this plant to flower and give fruit, but it will make a pretty houseplant. Citrus plants like lots of sun and HATE the cold. They are really trees that can get 20 feet tall. Giving your plant lots of sun, misting it and snipping off the top, growing tip can keep it shorter and force it to make side branches. Limes may be the best bet because they are the smallest of these trees.

Avocado Pits - An avocado pit will sprout nicely if you just plant it in soil, pointed end down, so a little bit of it sticks out of the dirt. Plant the seed before it dries out. You don't have to stick toothpicks in it and grow it in water to start it like a lot of people do. Keep the soil moist, but not too wet. Be sure not to let the soil dry out too much before it sprouts. As with citrus plants, you can snip off the top, growing tip to force it to make more branches. Like citrus plants, avocados like lots of light...but warm, dry, indoor conditions may drop too many leaves. It is said that the best place to grow them avocados is "in the sunniest window of the coldest room in the house".

Carrot Tops - If you plant a little part of a carrot where the green plant had been attached, it will sprout. It may even grow a whole new carrot! Just make sure not to over-water it OR let it dry out.

Onions and Garlic - Try planting an onion that sprouted but was getting soft, or plant the root part of an onion that got cut off before cooking. Try planting the little, inner cloves of garlic that are usually too small to bother cooking. Plant them so the pointed top is about 1 / 2 deep in the soil.

Potatoes - If there is a potato that is old and about to be thrown out, cut out a piece of it with at least one "eye" and plant it about an inch deep. It will grow into a cool plant!

Other things to try planting - a dried bean, lentil, seed from a fresh tomato, green pepper, watermelon or cantaloupe, an acorn, or a kernel of popcorn! Also, try planting some seeds from the spice rack. Sesame and Poppy seeds are probably toasted & dead. But Dill & Celery should sprout and you can eat what grows!

Cuttings - If mom or dad trims a house plant because it was getting too tall or too long, try putting the cut end of a trimming into water. Many cuttings will grow roots and can then be planted in a pot of soil. Make sure to change the water every week or it will get slimy and kill the cutting. Plant it in soil once the roots are about 3 inches long.

Some planting hints - Don't plant a seed deeper than twice the length of the seed. As I mentioned a few times above...Always keep the soil warm and moist and never let the soil dry out before the seed sprouts...but don't water seeds too much or you will get mud that will drown the plant.

By the way, seeds like Lettuce and Radishes are very cheap and they sprout and grow quickly indoors. Plus, they really give you plants that you can pick and eat and taste delicious!