

## Bag Gardens – How to make one

### A big garden in a small space

*"I have Bag Gardens throughout the year. I've been harvesting eggplants. I even had my tomatoes through the dry season. People were buying tomatoes from my place. I have onions in my Bag Gardens because of the compost."*

Jane Apollot Emulai, Uganda

#### Materials you need before you start:

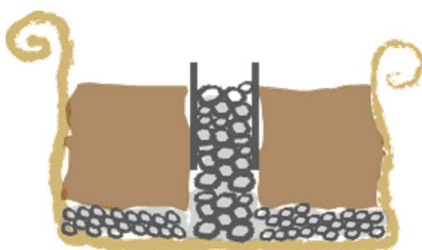
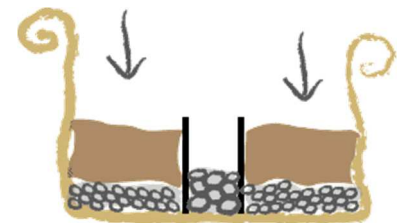
- A hessian sack
- A large plastic drinks bottle (2 litre) with both ends cut off to make a tube (use a smaller bottle for Mini-Bags)
- Some stones or coarse gravel
- Mixture of well-draining topsoil and composted material, plus some well-rotted animal manure, if you can get it!



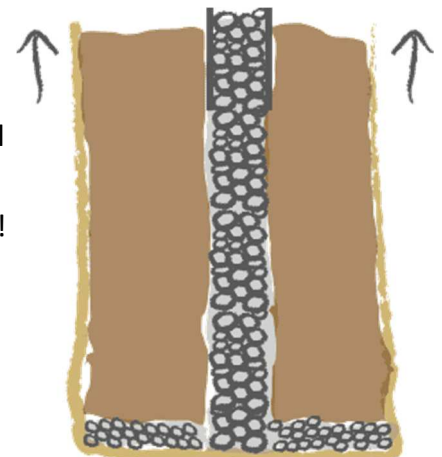
A bag garden in the demonstration garden of the ward for malnourished children at Jinja Hospital, Uganda. Parents are instructed how to grow vegetables and fruits.

#### Making the bag garden

1. Start by finding a good spot for your bag, preferably sheltered with plenty of sun, access to water, and close to your kitchen. They work best when placed on large stones or bricks to aid drainage.
2. Roll down the edges of your bag and add a layer of stones at the base for drainage. Place the tube in the bottom and fill it with stones. Put a mixture of soil, compost and manure around the outside of the tube and press in lightly.
3. Now remove the tube. This should leave a circle of stones in the middle of the soil mix.

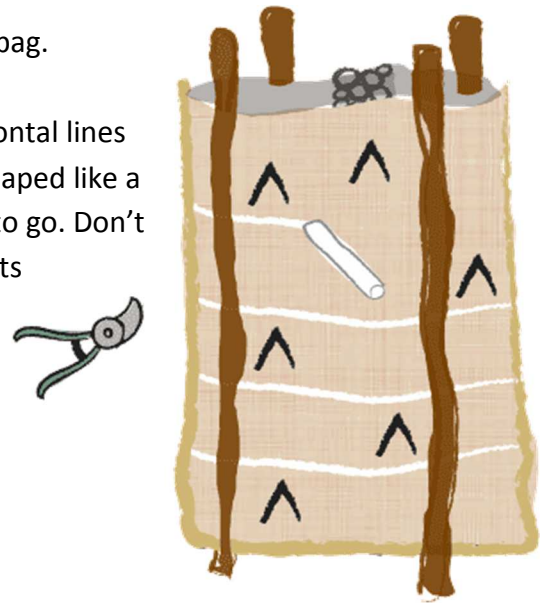


Raise the tube and keep repeating steps 2 and 3 until your bag is full of soil and you have a full column of stones at the centre. Try and keep the bag upright as you go!



- If you need to, hammer in some stakes to support the bag.
- Using chalk, mark out four or five equally spaced horizontal lines around the bag. Carefully cut some holes in the bag, shaped like a triangle along these lines where you want your plants to go. Don't place them exactly above each other, but give the plants enough room to grow. The holes should be just big enough to get the plant in.

Their clever vertical design means Bag Gardens can grow up to 50 vegetables at one time!



- Now plant your seeds or seedlings into these holes and at the top of your bag (great for climbers), making sure that they are held in place by the soil. Water the garden generously at first and then regularly from above onto the column of stones, preferably with rainwater. Use an organic feed or make your own 'plant tea' and pesticide and watch your bag produce some amazing results!

Bag Gardens are a great way to start growing or to liven up your existing patch. They are a sack filled with a mixture of compost and soil around a central column of stones. Water is filtered to the vegetables planted on the top and in the sides – and you have a super multi-storey vegetable garden!

This photograph shows the successful bag garden of Pastor Ben in Butere, Kenya.



With many thanks to the organization "Send a cow" for this information, see

<http://www.sendacow.org.uk/africangardensuk/>