








# How to build a Keyhole Garden

Keyhole Gardens act like an organic recycling tank, using your food and garden waste as fuel to grow vegetables! You can adapt the method below according to what materials you have and who is looking after it.

## Materials you need before you start:

-  Large stones, bricks or logs
-  Straw or dry sticks
-  Garden twine
-  Several 5ft garden canes or similar
-  Broken plant pots or tin cans
-  A length of wire
-  Mixture of well-draining topsoil & compost, plus some well-rotted animal manure

## Building a Keyhole Garden



these steps explained overleaf...

## Instructions

You will need to find a good site for your garden, with plenty of sun, access to a water-butt and as close to your classroom or kitchen as possible.



**1** Dig over a space of three square metres. Tie a stick to each end of 1.2 metres of garden twine. Place one end in the centre of your space and use the other to mark a circle in the ground. Then draw out an entrance triangle, from the circle to the centre, starting at a width of 60cm.

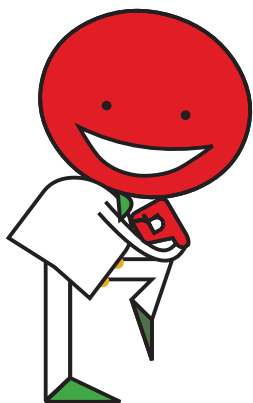
**2** Lay down the canes 5-10 cm apart. Wrap wire around each one, attaching it to the next until they are all in a line, do this at the top and the bottom of the canes. The total length should be about 130cm. Now make this into a cylinder and push into the ground at the centre of your space. Half-fill this 'compost basket' with top-soil to make a mound and line the inside of it with straw.





**3** Lay your stones, bricks or logs around the perimeter of your garden - this could be a single layer or more, but enough to keep the soil in. Build the stones higher at the entrance triangle. Make the first layer of the garden from broken plant pots or cans to improve drainage.

**4** Now start filling the garden with the soil and compost. Make sure that the best soil goes on top! Keep piling up the soil until you have a mound which slopes away from the basket.

**5** Let the garden settle a week before planting your seeds and seedlings. To start with, water the soil surface until the roots grow, then water the basket with waste or rainwater, using the entrance. Add already composted material to the basket and continue to add compostable food-waste. A circle of carpet over the top of the basket will help speed up the composting process. The compost will permeate the garden and give your crops lots of nutrients.

(More related resources and stories at [www.sendacow.org.uk/africangardens](http://www.sendacow.org.uk/africangardens))



-  If you are building on hard ground, make your garden a raised bed with higher sides.
-  Try growing tomatoes near the basket, using the canes as their support.
-  Experiment with mulching and adding fine layers of wood ash and straw when filling your garden with soil.
-  You can discover more things online to make and grow in your African Garden.

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