

Green Educator Lesson Plan:
Egg Carton Plant Starts





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Time:	About 15 minutes
Age Level:	All
Supervision required:	Yes, while using the scissors and poking holes in the egg carton (pre-cutting the egg cartons can make this a low supervision activity).
Can be used in conjunction with curricula about:	Biology, botany, reuse, gardening, observation, seasons

Materials

(per student)

- 1 cardboard egg carton*
- 1 sharpened pencil
- 1 permanent marker
- Sharp scissors
- 2 cups of potting soil
- 8 oz plastic yogurt container*
- Used plastic spoon*
- A variety of garden seeds

Before you start: Ask students to bring in an egg carton, an 8oz yogurt container, and a used plastic spoon for the project.



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Instructions:

1. Open the egg carton.
2. Then, use a pair of sharp scissors to cut across the paper hinge, leaving the top and bottom off the egg carton intact.
3. The egg carton is now in two pieces. Take the piece that contains the egg cups and poke a small hole in the bottom of each cup with a sharpened pencil. This hole will allow for drainage.
4. The upper half of the egg carton will be used as a tray. Nest this half under the egg cup half of the carton.
5. Each student will need about 2 cups of potting soil to fill an egg carton. For a tidy classroom, distribute the soil in reusable plastic containers (such as yogurt containers). Students can reuse a plastic spoon to transfer the potting soil into the egg carton.
6. Now it is time to pick out seeds. Pick a maximum of twelve different kinds of seeds.
7. Form a small indentation in the center of each egg cup.
8. Place several seeds into each indentation.
9. Sprinkle a final layer of potting soil over the seeds and press down lightly.



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10. Use popsicle sticks and a permanent marker to label each egg cup with the name of the seed it contains. Popsicle sticks can be taped to the outside of the egg carton.

11. Finally, place the full egg carton in an indoor spot which gets plenty of afternoon light.

12. Water the seeds lightly on the first day.

13. Watch the seeds begin to sprout over the next few days.

14. The students can keep a journal of the growth and watering schedule.

15. When the plants have grown to a height of several inches, it is time to plant them in a larger container. Cardboard egg cartons are biodegradable, so they can be planted along with the plant, providing extra carbon. The cartons can be cut into smaller parts to separate the different kinds of plants. Be careful to not disturb the plants while putting them in new soil.

Extra Credit:

- ✓ Take a picture and send it to greenteachers@creativereuse.org