HANGING GRAPE BOX PLANTERS

by **Thinkenstein** on June 27, 2009

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intro: HANGING GRAPE BOX PLANTERS

Styrofoam grape boxes make great nursery planters. They are a convenient size for carrying, are strong for their weight, and they last a long time. They come with ventilation holes, which serve as drainage holes for garden use -- and they are free!

The boxes come with lids, so from each box you get one deep tray and one shallow tray. I prefer the shallow lids for raising sprouts, such as sunflower seed sprouts and wheat grass. The deeper bottoms can be used for sprouting also, but I use them mostly for holding seedlings in cups of soil.

By hanging things up in the air, you avoid problems from rats, snails, slugs, and ground-crawling insects.

To hang the boxes I use galvanized iron wire and "S" hooks bent out of 1/4 inch rebar.

CPVC pipe goes through some of the vent holes, providing attachment points for the ends of the four wires that hold the planter.

step 1: TOOLS AND MATERIALS

TOOLS: Saw, knife, file. You may also find a pair of pliers to be useful.

MATERIALS: Styrofoam grape box, 1/2 inch CPVC pipe, 1/2 inch PVC pipe, wire.

step 2: CUT THE PIPE

There are two kinds of pipe used here. 1/2 inch PVC pipe is common plumbing pipe. CPVC pipe is similar but chemically a little different. It is used for hot water plumbing. For some reason, 1/2 inch PVC pipe refers to the inside diameter of the hole. 1/2 inch CPVC pipe refers to the outside diameter of the pipe.

There are some variations in the wall thickness of the PVC pipe. I use the thicker-walled pipe to make the end rings. They make a tight pressure fit over the CPVC pipe. Thin-walled PVC pipe fits too loosely for the purpose it serves in this project.

The grape boxes come in different widths sometimes. Measure and cut two pieces of the smaller diameter CPVC pipe. They should be long enough to stick out about 1 1/2 inches, or 2 inches on either side of the box.

Cut four sections of the 1/2 inch PVC that are about 3/4 inch long. These are the end rings that increase the outside diameter of the CPVC sections, thus preventing the wire used for hanging the planter from sliding off the end of the pipe.

step 3: PUSH THE CPVC PIPE THROUGH THE HOLES

Push the smaller diameter pipe through the holes before you tap the end rings onto the pipe. At least with the boxes I get here, the CPVC pipe makes a tight fit through the holes. If the rings were already on the ends, the pipes wouldn't fit through the holes.

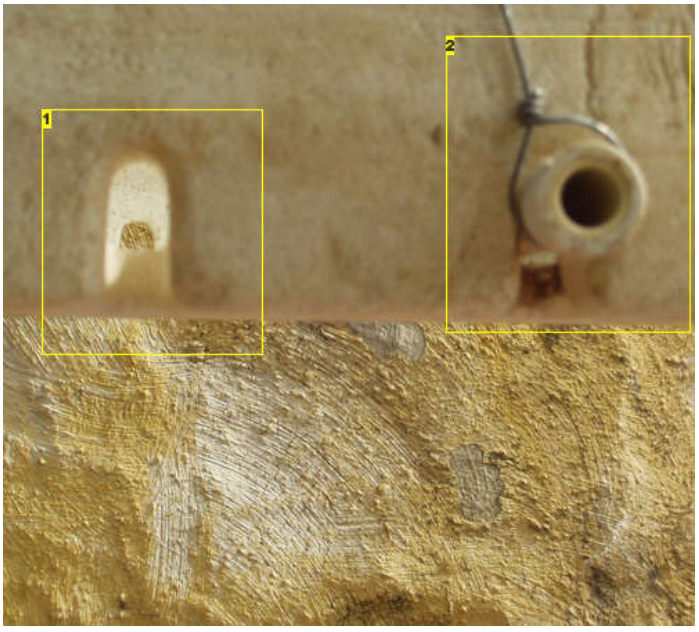


Image Notes
1. This is the hole the pipe has to fit through.
2. The end ring keeps the wire from sliding off the end of the pipe.

step 4: TAP THE END RINGS ON

There are alternative ways of attaching the wires to the hanging planter box if you can't find pipe that fits perfectly to make the end rings. You can just run the wire through the center of the pipe, or attach the wires in some other way to the ends of the pipe.

I like the system I am demonstrating because the wires can be easily removed from the pipe ends if for some reason I want to have the box without the wires. The loops at the ends of the wire just slide over the end rings when the tension on the wires is relaxed.

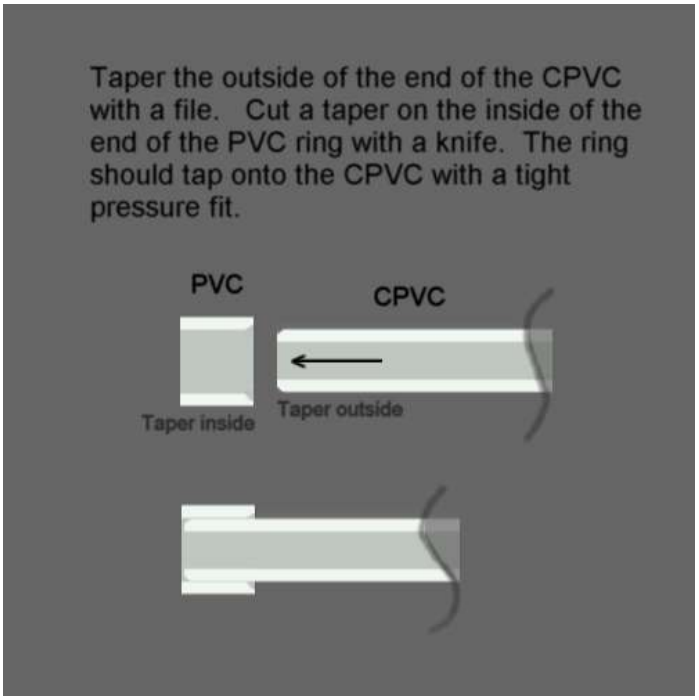
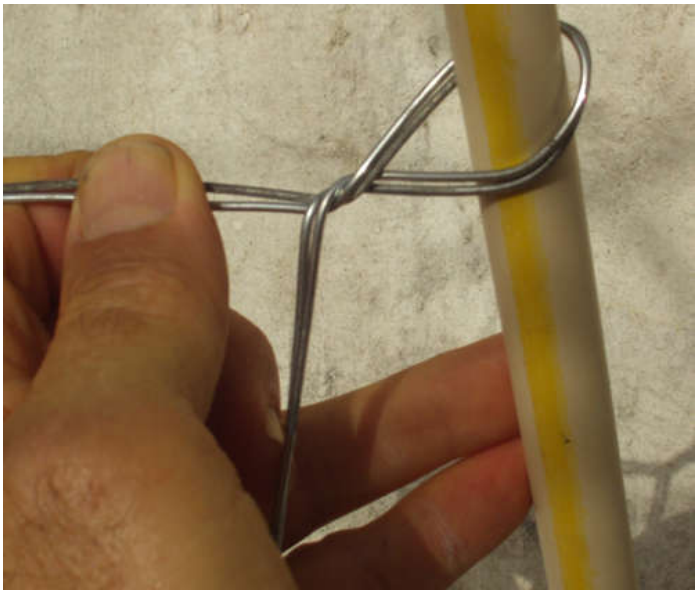


Image Notes
1. The end rings keep the wire from sliding off the ends of the pipes.

step 5: BEND THE WIRES TO MAKE A HANGING LOOP

You want a ring at the top, for hanging the planter with an "S" hook, and four wires coming down to hold each end of the two pipes.

Cut two sections of wire about 6 ft. long. Bend them both in half, run a piece of pipe through them temporarily and start twisting. Each of the wires will be about 3 ft. long. Bending the wires can be done by hand, but a pair of pliers may come in handy for getting tight bends and for cutting the excess wire off when you are done.



step 6: BEND THE END LOOPS

If all four wires are the same length, the planter will hang level. To get them the same length, I hang the wires from the hanging loop, pull them all down tightly, and wrap them together around a piece of the 1/2 inch PVC pipe, the same diameter pipe they will have to pass over later.

After getting all four wires started together, I finish them individually, twisting the wires tightly.

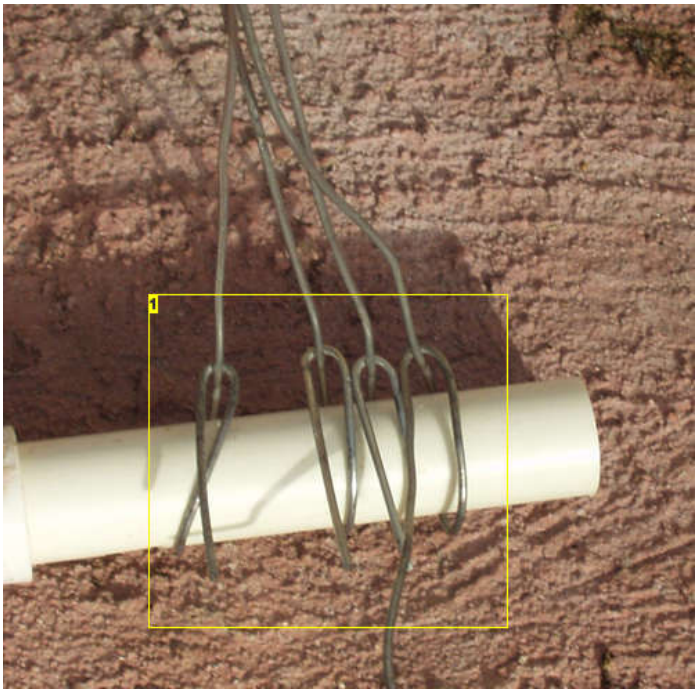


Image Notes
1. The end loops are just started.

Image Notes
1. The end rings keep the wire from sliding off the ends of the pipes.

step 7: HANG IT UP

Hang it up to see how it looks. At this point, line the box with some newspaper to keep from losing potting soil out the drain holes. One sheet of newspaper is enough. You still want water to get through.

step 8: FILL IT UP

Fill the planter up with the potting soil you plan to use. In this case, I am using pure leaf compost.

Bring on the seeds!

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