



Hoarding for the Garden

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I have a great distaste for clutter of all sorts. Nevertheless, when its wintertime and the outside world is a snow covered icy laden mess I have a big soft spot for things that look like they could be put to good use in the garden this coming spring.

Sure, a few plants made it indoors this fall but with working the actual land a number of months away collecting various items to help in eventually cultivating our fruits and vegetables breeds some much needed gardening satisfaction.

Ahh, the things a green thumb will do when the world is blanketed white.

This hoarding for the garden, if I may call it that, doesn't have any set rules and can be different for everyone because everyone's garden is unique and has diverse needs. At the same time there are some commonalities which all of us gardeners relate to, though we may come to them from different angles.

Some of what I hoard for the upcoming gardening season includes the following:

- **Renovation scraps:** Are you doing any indoor renovations this winter or perhaps know a friend or family member who is? If so my experience is there are a lot of good scraps from these jobs that can be used in the garden. That being the case whether it's a carpenter, plumber, or [tile contractor](#) [1] ask to check their junk pile before they leave. Wood can be used for garden beds, mulch, or to build a small DIY greenhouse; old pipes for guiding water to plant roots; and tiles work great for makeshift walkways throughout large growing areas.
- **Newsprint:** Every once in a while I still buy the Sunday paper but I usually recycle it. Around this time of year I'll hold on to it for use in the garden. Newsprint is biodegradable and can be used for a number of things such as composting. I sometimes use it to make small pots for transplanting seedlings which will disintegrate when they little plants are set in the ground.

- Egg cartons: As someone who leads an eco-friendly lifestyle I try my best to stay away from packaging which can't be recycled. For this reason when it comes to eggs I usually buy brands that come in cardboard cartons. In the months leading up to the new growing season I save a bunch of these because the individual cells that make up each carton are great for transplanting seedlings.
- Cardboard containers: Like egg cartons cardboard containers from milk, juice, and other drinks are great for transplanting into and then putting directly into the ground. Unless I'm putting a plant on the patio I almost never need to buy any extra pots anymore.
- Food: Well, I don't really hoard food but like house remodeling scraps food scraps are extremely useful for composting. I compost throughout the year but make an extra effort in the winter in order to feed the garden well.

Finally, it's important to note that while hoarding is the term I chose to use don't go overboard. Only save the things that you really think will be of use and when the season gets underway let go of those things which are no longer needed.

For better or for worse there will always be more stuff to collect next year and believe me you'll enjoy the garden better if your life isn't so cluttered indoors.

Jakob Barry is a home improvement journalist for Networx.com. He blogs for pros across the U.S. like [Oklahoma City, OK, concrete contractors](#) [2] and [Pasadena, TX, exterminators](#) [3].

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