

Terrariums



Begonia microsperma in terrarium

One of the simplest indoor arrangements is the terrarium. Once it is set up it is unusually easy-care and most striking. Terrariums come in varying shapes and sizes from a brandy snifter on a short stem to the large circular or oval vases or fish bowls and tanks. The size of the container depends on the type and amount of greenery, soil and accent pieces (rocks, sticks, statues, etc.) that you want to include.

Terrariums can be largely decorative or serve the purpose of protecting tropical species.

Small rhizomatous begonias and Rex begonias with their colourful leaves are ideal for indoor display.

Preparing your container

Start with a well-cleaned container. Place a layer of flaked horticultural charcoal on the bottom – about 5mm – 10 mm for drainage. Then a layer of coarse sand followed by a layer of good-quality open potting mix that has been slightly dampened.

Viewing Angle

A terrarium can be designed for viewing from all sides or it can be terraced and leveled for viewing from a single angle. After planting, rocks often give the arrangement added interest. A little green

sphagnum moss will help retain moisture and keep the soil from creeping up the sides of the glass.

Choosing Plants

Carefully choose your plants. Their fully-grown size needs to be suited to your container. Some of the more popular terrarium plants are miniature begonias such as *B.* ‘Abel Carriere’, *B. bowerea*, *B. decora*, *B. masoniana* and *B.* ‘Benitochiba’.

Before bedding a plant or multiple plants, remove some of the soil from the roots. Place each plant carefully, giving space to grow. Water just enough to settle in place.

Cover your terrarium with glass or plastic to maintain humidity only in a room where it is dry or air moves frequently.

If moisture gathers remove the top for at least 20 minutes.

Water with a small amount of water if the soil surface is dry or when any plant shows slight wilting.

Place terrarium in indirect light to keep plants healthy or use a grow light. Do NOT place in direct sunlight.

There is no need to feed terrarium plants.

Melbourne Begonia Society Inc.

Email: begoniasmelb@live.com.au

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Meetings: Tucker Road Bentleigh Primary School
16 Tucker Road, Bentleigh 3204

Third Saturday of: February, April, June, August and October,
& First Saturday of December.

Meetings start at 1:30 pm

Visitors welcome