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Have You the Yen To Make Things Grow?

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Have You the Yen To

Make things grow?

Make windows gay from inside and out with easily nurtured flowers, suggests Betty Ann Iverson

A FEW gay plants or a whole window garden display might turn the trick and make your room the envy of the dormitory.

For a starter on a simple and easy-to-grow garden you might invest a few pennies in a sweet potato. It must be placed in a large jar with enough water to keep the lower tip moist. When the tuber is kept in a glass container the attractive growing white roots of the vine can be seen.

A bouquet of fluffy carrot tops results in an attractive display. To make this bouquet, cut off the tops of several carrots and two-thirds of the root and place in a dish of water filled with stones. From the old foliage new little green shoots will sprout.

A radiator under the window creates hazards for plant life. A pan of galvanized iron made to fit the sill and filled with small white pebbles and water will hold the potted plants such as fragrant narcissuses and lilies-of-the-valley, thus providing insulation from the hot radiator.

Color will run rampant in your room if you become an enthusiastic gardener. Hang strings of brightly colored gourds beside windows and grow brilliant geraniums and begonias for gay touches. As the holiday season nears, a poinsettia is festive. Pastel colors flourish with African violets, hyacinths, daffodils, tulips and narcissuses in the spring.

A north window doesn’t mean that your gardening career is impracticable. With a sand base, thick moss can be planted in a flat pan. Little figures, tiny bushes and trees can transform mossy turf into a miniature fairyland.

For busy college women, a cactus garden is simple and effective. Brilliant turquoise, orange and yellow pots can be used. Christmas cacti and varieties of giant flowering cacti furnish blossoms on a minimum of care and water.

Glowing red geraniums flourish in the full summer, while a north window suits the delicate blue African violets. Cyclamen, primroses, miniature palms, begonias and small ferns are popular indoor plants.

For a special treat buy a forced bulb once a month and watch a lovely tulip or hyacinth blossom.

All of these plants are easy to care for and can be bought quite inexpensively from a florist. Many of the vines thrive in water while the other plants require a minimum of loam, mold, soil and sand. Plants from the florist’s do not need extra plant food for about two months. Then a little bone meal should be added.

To relieve the watering needs of your plants while you are away for a short vacation, set the pots around a bucket of water. Twist cloths into wicks which extend from the bucket to the plants. This will keep a dozen plants moist for over a week.

Don’t be afraid to correct the shape of your plant by pruning with scissors. Large, over-grown or diseased plants cause extra trouble and are less attractive than small ones.

Your plants would enjoy a daily shower with a spray gun. Tap the pot to see if the plant needs watering. A dull sound means the soil is damp enough while a clear ring indicates it is thirsty. It should never be over-watered but only given as much liquid as it can absorb.

The amateur collegiate gardener would be smart to begin her botanical ventures with a few dependable plants such as English ivy, philodendron and geraniums. When these old stand-bys are doing well, she might try cultivating some vivid tropical vines or an African violet.