



Pots of options

Mark Rayner shows ways you can recycle old containers as bulb planters.

BULBS are a fabulous way to welcome spring. If you plant them in containers you can move them into a prime position when they are budding up and later on move them out of the way when they're looking less than their best. Bulbs also lend themselves to recycled, quirky containers like these.



Terracotta treasures

If you recycle old terracotta pots and pipes into bulb planters they can be left to weather naturally or brightened up with a lick of paint. Either way, it's a good idea to seal them with Resene Terracotta Sealer. This vivid pink pot started life as a terracotta bowl. I sealed it before painting it with Resene Mandy and Resene Sensual Red.



Plastic fantastic

We all have plastic plant pots lurking in the shed. While functional, they're often not that attractive, so instead of throwing them away, transform them with a lick of paint. To create this metallic gold effect, first sand a plastic pot to provide a key, and then apply a coat of Resene Smooth Surface Sealer. Once it's dry, apply Resene Sandtex to create a textured surface. I followed this with a coat of Resene Porsche and two coats of Resene Bullion (test pots will do) and finished up with three coats of Resene Multishield + gloss.



Concrete evidence

Create this bright primary-coloured, cube bulb pot from an old concrete block and a few test pots. Make a base for the block with an off cut of exterior plywood – drill a drainage hole and then fix it into position with exterior construction glue, as shown. When the glue is dry, prime the concrete with Resene Concrete primer. When that's dry, finish with two coats each of your chosen colours – I used Resene Fizz, Resene Monza and Resene Resolution Blue.





Metal mania

Old metal pots and pans make superb bulb planters. Copper ones like this will last outside for years without any protection. You will need to drill drainage holes with a suitable metal drill bit. To stop the drill bit from slipping, simply criss-cross two pieces of masking tape or duct tape on the base of the pot and drill through the double layer of tape, as shown.

Olive-oil tins and stainless steel mixing bowls also make great bulb planters – and old metal colanders make great hanging baskets. You can paint metal containers but use an appropriate metal primer first.



Nuts for coconuts

You can make two mini-hanging baskets from an old coconut cut in half. Drill three 10mm holes around the rim of each coconut half and another 10mm hole in their bases for drainage. Thread twine through the three top holes and tie a knot in each end to fix. To get the dark, shiny outer surface, apply two or three coats of Resene Multishield + gloss to the coconut halves, allowing two hours for each coat to dry.

HOLE HINTS

Drainage holes are a must in bulb planters as water-logged potting mix can cause bulbs to rot.

- When drilling through the base of a ceramic glazed pot, use a ceramic drill bit and first put a square of duct tape on the pot base to prevent the bit from sliding.
- Punch a hole in the base of a tin can with a nail before drilling – this will also stop the drill bit from sliding (see photo).
- Use the right drill bit when drilling holes in wooden planters. If you only have a basic selection of drill bits, a series of 10mm holes should do the trick.
- Plastic bowls can be quite brittle. To prevent splitting, start off by drilling a small hole first and gradually increase the size of the hole with progressively larger drill bits.
- Small concrete bowls or troughs will need a masonry bit to make holes in the base.
- Always take care when using power tools and wear appropriate ear and eye protection.

