



Help Wildlife with Milk Jugs

You can help wildlife and create habitat with empty milk jugs! Follow the steps below to create one or more project and make a difference in your own backyard!

Project 1: Milk Jug Planter

Create habitat for insects and small animals by creating a mini garden in a milk jug. You can even help important pollinators, like butterflies and bees, by planting native pollinator plant species. Check out plants.usda.gov for recommendations.



You will need:

One milk jug, scissors, potting soil or dirt, seeds or plants, and paint/crayons/markers or stickers for decorating.



Check off the steps as you go:

_____ **Step 1** - Create the shape of the planter. Use your marker to draw a dotted line horizontally along your jug. The depth of your planter is up to you! Then take your scissors to cut along your dotted line and remove the top portion of the planter. Refer to the picture above.

_____ **Step 2** – Decorate. Use your markers, paint, crayons or stickers to decorate as you would like! Make sure your markers or paint are waterproof so that your planter can go outside.

_____ **Step 3** – Fill the planter. Put dirt/soil in the bottom of your planter, filling it about 2/3 of the height.

_____ **Step 4** – Plant your plants. If you have seeds, poke small holes to put the seeds in and cover them with soil. If you have plants, dig holes that are deep enough to fit all the roots of your plants in and then cover with soil. Pat the top of the soil so that it is slightly firm, and add enough water to wet the soil enough that it is damp but not soaked. Move your planter to an area outside where it gets sunlight.

You are now ready to watch your plants grow and become habitats!

Project 2: Milk Jug Shovel

Want to make a larger garden to create even more habitat? Dig spots for the plants with a milk jug shovel. Use it to plant flowers, pollinator plants, or herbs!



You will need:

One milk jug, scissors, and a marker.



Check off the steps as you go:

_____ **Step 1** - Create the shape of the shovel. Use your marker to draw a dotted line around the top of the jug handle. Then draw a dotted line going along the inside bottom area of the handle, and downwards from both sides to the bottom of the jug, creating a rounded point at the bottom. Refer to the picture above to see the dotted line shapes.

_____ **Step 2** – Cut out the shovel. Use your scissors to carefully cut along your dotted lines and remove the shovel from the rest of the jug.

You are now ready to dig holes to put plants in your garden!

Project 3: Milk Jug Watering Can

Keep the plants in your planter or garden healthy with a milk jug watering can! Make sure to do your research so that your plants receive the right amount of water to encourage their best growth.



You will need:

One milk jug, scissors, and paint/crayons/markers or stickers for decorating.



Check off the steps as you go:

____ **Step 1** - Create the holes for the water to pour from. Use your marker to draw dots on the top of the cap, where you would like the holes to be. Make sure the dots are evenly spaced. Usually about 5 holes are sufficient. Take your scissors and carefully poke holes into the top of the cap.

____ **Step 2** – Decorate! Use your paint, crayons, markers or stickers to decorate as you would like. Make sure your markers or paint are waterproof. Avoid decorating the cap.

____ **Step 3** – Fill your jug. If your cap is a pop off cap, then only partially fill your jug with water. This will avoid the cap popping off and water spilling. If your cap is a screw on cap, then you can completely fill your jug.

You are now ready to water your plants to help them grow!

Project 4: Milk Jug Bird Feeder

Want to help even more species?
Create a hanging bird feeder that you can add to your garden, yard, or even outside of a window. Your feeder can help not only birds, but squirrels and chipmunks, and more!



You will need:

One milk jug, bird seed or sunflower seeds, string, duct tape, scissors, two sticks that are a few inches longer than the width of the jug, and paint/crayons/markers or stickers for decorating.





Check off the steps as you go:

_____ **Step 1** - Create the openings. Draw dotted lines on the jug to create the squares that you will cut out as openings for the birds to go in or lean through to get seed. You can cut squares on 2, 3, or 4 sides. Refer to the picture above to see the general size for the openings. Use your scissors to carefully cut out the openings.

_____ **Step 2** - Put in the stick perches. Draw a dot underneath your openings. Make sure that the dots line up with the dots that are on the opposite side. For example: sides 1 and 3 dots could be $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the bottom, and sides 2 and 4 could be 1 inch from the bottom. Lining the opposite sides up makes sure that the perches fit through without hitting each other. Refer to the picture above to see where you can draw the dots.

Use your scissors to poke holes wide enough for the sticks to be pushed through. Push your sticks through, making sure each one goes through both holes and making sure that there is some of the stick that is out on both sides.

_____ **Step 3** - Attach the string for hanging. If your jug has a pop off cap, then tie the string tightly around the top of the jug, avoiding the cap. If your jug has a screw on cap, use your scissors to poke a hole through the top of the cap. Pull your string through the hole and tie a large and tight knot on the inside of the cap. Put the cap back on the jug and pull the string so that the knot is against the top of the cap and your jug can hang by the string.

_____ **Step 4** - Decorate. Line the edges of the cut openings with the tape. This will make the edges less sharp and safer for the animals. Now use your markers and/or stickers to decorate as you would like! Make sure your markers or paint are waterproof so that your feeder can go outside.

_____ **Step 5** – Hang your feeder. Tie the end of your string to a branch, railing, windowsill, or any place that works for you. Once it's hanging, pour some bird seed in the bottom.

You are now ready to watch wildlife eat from your feeder!