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New uses for old junk for your garden

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John L. White/St. Louis Post-Dispatch

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A Radio Flyer wagon rescued from a trash bin was drilled with holes for drainage and filled with miniature plants. Vibrant paint turns a chair into a planter, and plants spill from holes in an old boot.



John L. White/St. Louis Post-Dispatch

[ENLARGE PHOTO](#)

By **Karen Deer**

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

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Are you a scavenger? If you are, maybe you'll be lucky enough to find a Radio Flyer stuffed into a city trash bin, as we did. It was old, rusty and could barely move. We grabbed it.

If not, you might want to hold on to some of your junk for your garden paths, patios and porches.

With the help of a garden center, the red wagon was transformed into a lavish garden centerpiece, filled with annuals, perennials and herbs.

You can personalize your garden with old junky items scavenged from basements, garage sales and flea markets. See what a little fresh paint, new blooms and even strawberries did to these old items.

Old wooden chair

1. Cut center out of chair seat so pot can rest on the frame.
2. Spray paint chair and pot.
3. Plant large pot (we used a 12-inch clay pot plus smaller potted plants for the ladder back of the chair) filled with yellow sweet potato vine, red verbena, "Tango Neon" purple geranium, calibrachoa "Dreamsicle," Supertunia "Royal Velvet" and premium potting soil

Price: \$55 for soil, flowers and spray paint

Old metal watering can

1. Fill the bottom one-third of the can with crumpled plastic containers to improve drainage.
2. Fill the rest of the can with potting soil.



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An old boot can be re-purposed for the garden.



John L. White/St. Louis Post-Dispatch/MCT

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A red radio flyer wagon can be re-purposed for the garden.

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3. For height, plant a white caladium. For fullness, plant a dragon wing begonia and torenia "Blue Wave."

4. To soften the look, plant asparagus fern to drape over the edge.

5. After planting, spread a slow-release fertilizer and then cover the soil with sphagnum moss for a finished look.

Price: \$25 for soil, flowers, plants and fertilizer

Old boot

1. Remove the steel toe, creating a hole, and the shoe tongue.

2. Drill holes through the sole near the ball of the foot and one hole in the arch.

3. Plant the small toe hole with spicy mix micro-greens such as cabbage "Red Ace," mustard "Sawtooth" and radish "China Rose." Wrap the green tops in a rolled newspaper to prevent them from becoming damaged while threading them through the boot and then into the small hole.

4. Line the back of the shoe and the tongue area with a scrap of coir liner. This liner is typically used in hanging baskets. Add potting mix and time-release fertilizer.

5. Plant the boot with Lavandula stoechas "Blueberry Ruffles," pansy "Fizzy Lemonberry" and nemesia "Violet Ice."

6. Arrange the boot's laces and water thoroughly.

Price: \$10 to \$15 for flowers, fertilizer, potting mix and coir liner

Red Radio Flyer wagon

1. Drill holes in the wagon for drainage. Line with pebbles for additional drainage.

2. Fill wagon ½ full to ¾ full with Miracle Gro potting mix containing Osmocote.

3. Select miniature plants such as miniature conifers, pathway plants, herbs and small flowering perennials and annuals. Add fragrant flowers for bees and butterflies. Plants used: dwarf Alberta spruce, common juniper, Paul's dwarf mugo pine, digitalis "Goldcrest," English daisy, Sedum yunnanense, sweet alyssum, Scotch moss, ajuga "Chocolate Chip" and herniaria "Sea Foam."

4. Add accessories including a miniature cottage with a fence and gate, stones to terrace and create paths and colored glass to create a stream. Other decorative items used: a miniature garden bench, chair, wheelbarrow, flower pot, beehive, birdhouse, birdbath, miniature bees, butterflies, ladybugs, birds, raccoon, a cat, a toad with a toadstool and, of course, fairies.

Price: \$75 to \$100 includes soil, flowers, fairies and accessories

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