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Facilitated by:
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PLANTING A CONTAINER FOR A BALCONY GARDEN



**LITTLE MOUNTAIN
NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE**
3981 Main Street, Vancouver | lmnhs.bc.ca



Considerations for a container garden are the size of the balcony and the space needed for the plants. Containers on balconies always need to have a drainage tray, the one pictured here has a built in one.

It is important the container has drainage holes; if not, the plant roots will be too wet and eventually rot. Not all containers have drainage holes, so always check for them.



While very little soil escapes through the drainage holes, it is recommended to line the bottom of the container with a porous material, such as landscape cloth, to keep the soil contained and help retain moisture.



The material used must allow water to seep through, so do not use plastic.

Lay landscape cloth on bottom of container over drainage holes.



Fill the planter with potting soil, do NOT use garden soil as is too heavy.



Soil for planters needs to be light weight, water retentive and well drained. It is a combination of peat (or coir), perlite and vermiculite - we used a brand called Pro-Mix readily available at garden centres and Home Depot or Lowe's.



Place plants in the planter, still in their pots, so you can test out the spacing needed when planting.



Make a hole for the first plant, starting at one end of the planter. You can put the plant, still in its pot, in to the hole to see if it's large enough.



Gently invert
the plant out
of its small
growing pot,
being careful
not to disturb
its roots.



Sometimes,
when plants
have been in a
pot for too
long, the roots
grow around in
circles, and
will keep
growing in
circles,
eventually
strangling
itself.

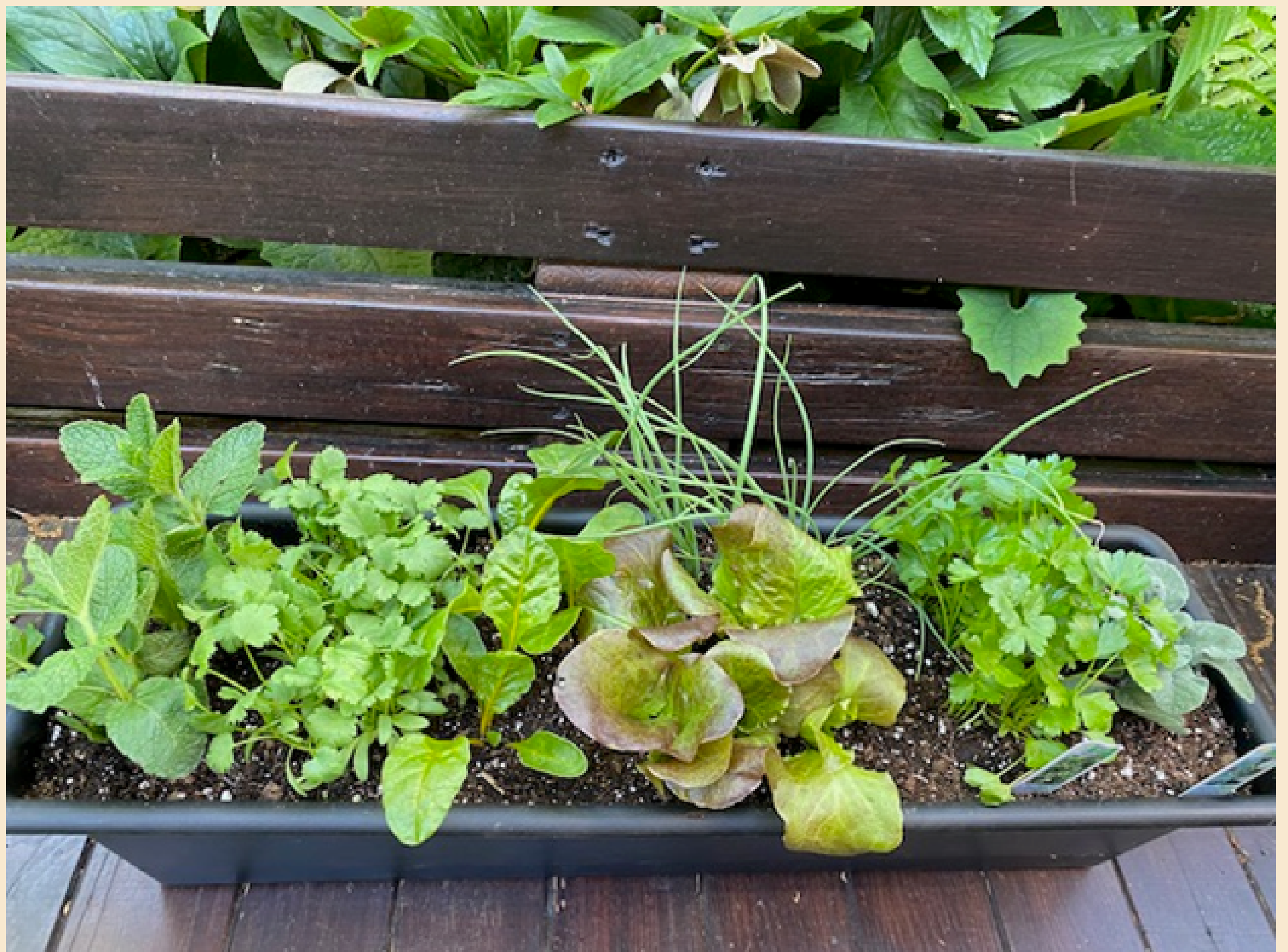


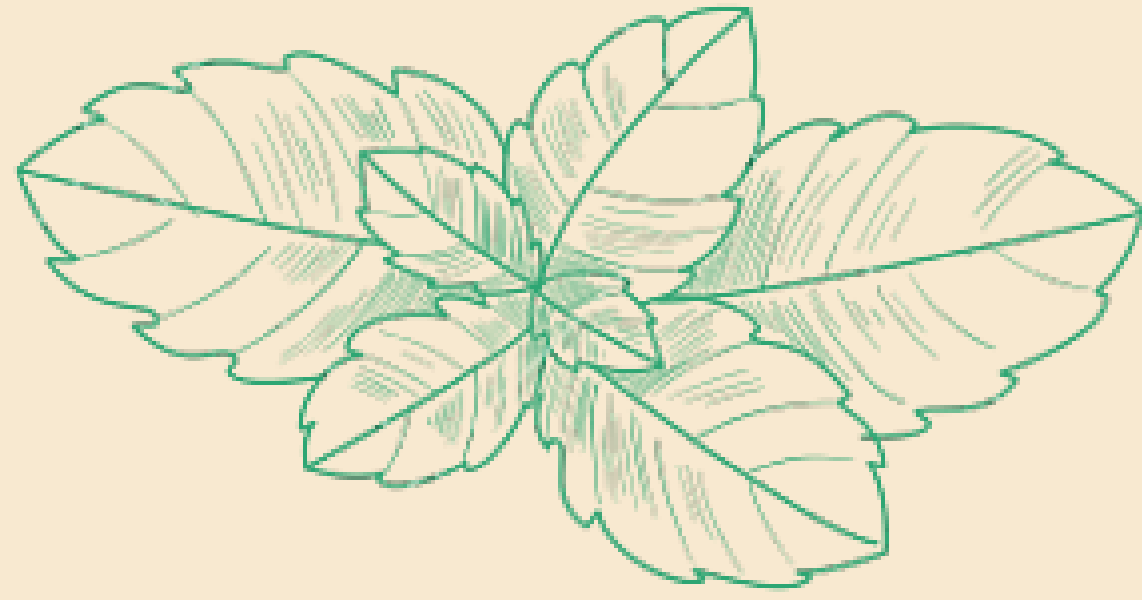


Gently pull apart and unwind the roots so the plant knows it can now grow in a different direction.

Finished planter (from left to right) with mint, cilantro, chard, lettuce, bunching onion, parsley & sage!

This planter is very tightly planted. Ideally these plants would like to be spread out more if you have more space.





- Some of the plants are annuals (cilantro, parsley, lettuce, chard, bunching onions) and are meant to be grown and harvested the same year.
- Mint is a perennial (comes back every year) and is an enthusiastic spreader, so it will eventually take over the entire planter; it is best kept in a contained area, such as a planter.
- Sage is a small shrub, and if it has enough growing space it will last for many years. Sage would ideally grow best and overwinter best in a larger pot.

In the heat of the summer, planters this size dry out very quickly, so should be watered well every 2-3 days. All these plants need to grow outside.



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