

Growing Shrubs and Trees from Cuttings

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As prepared, this leaflet may be used as a guide in giving a Method Demonstration.

PURPOSE OF DEMONSTRATION

Show how to choose branches and make cuttings; how to select soil for growing cuttings and how to set them out; how to care for cuttings; and how to transplant rooted cuttings.

CHOOSE AND MAKE A HARDWOOD CUTTING

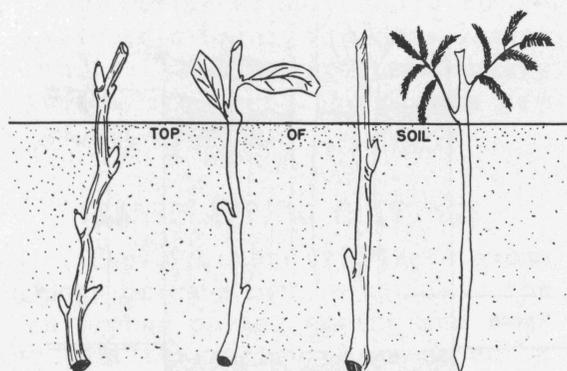
1. Show and discuss (1) old wood, (2) tender growing wood and (3) young but matured wood.
2. Choose a piece of young mature wood and make a cutting. Explain that the length of the cutting may vary. Five to 12 inches is about right for outdoor planting. It usually is shorter if cutting wood is scarce or the cutting is to be grown in a pot.
3. Explain that leaving too many leaves and twigs at the top may

kill some cuttings, but a few leaves will help form roots and feed the plant. Cut off all leaves on that part of the cutting which goes underground.

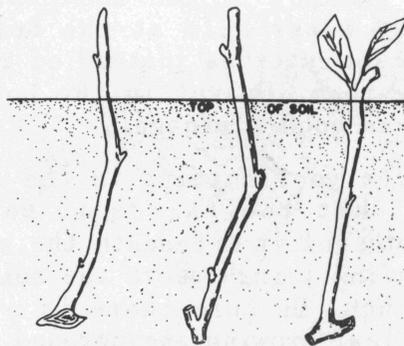
4. Mention that at least one bud or leaf should be left within 1 inch of the top and be left aboveground when the cutting is planted.

SOFTWOOD CUTTINGS

1. In spring and summer, cuttings of growing wood are sometimes used.
2. Softwood cuttings may be grown under protection, as in a greenhouse, anytime of year. You can protect a cutting from drying and freezing by inverting a glass jar over it. The jar also protects the cutting from destructive winds.
3. Explain that growing wood should have some maturity when taken for a cutting.



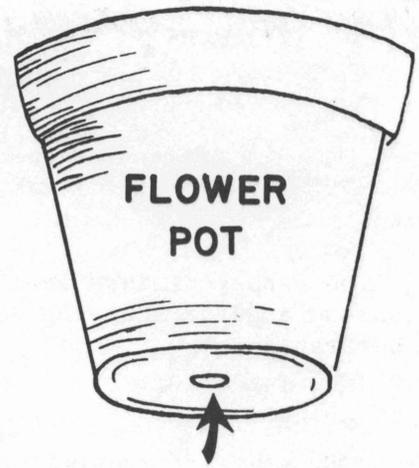
Straight Cuttings From
Mature Or Tender Wood



Heel And Mallet Cuttings
From Tender Wood With A Bit
Of Mature Wood Attached



HOLES FOR DRAINAGE



HOLE FOR DRAINAGE

4. Many annual and perennial plants will root from cuttings. Tender tips of tomatoes and carnations are among those that will root.

SELECT SOIL AND PLANT CUTTING

1. Show a pot or can filled with coarse white unfertilized sand. If you do not have sand, use loam or any unfertilized garden soil. Explain that fertilizing cuttings may cause them to decay before they root. Most cuttings root well in coarse sand. Some will root in water or fine gravel, peat moss and many other materials.

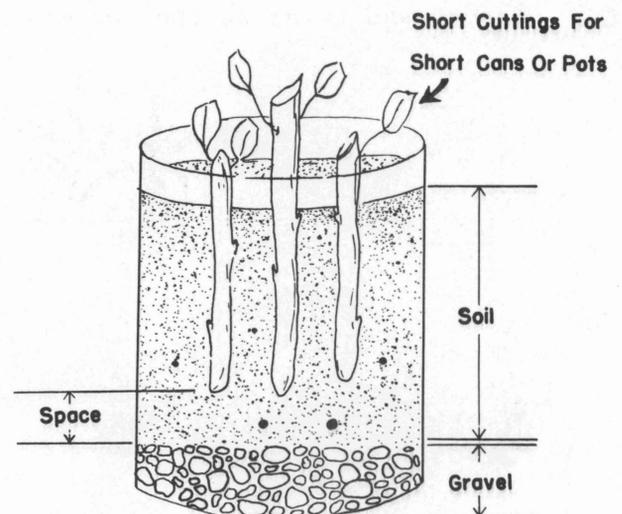
2. Show drainage holes in the bottom of the pot or can and explain that water held at the bottom may rot cuttings instead of rooting them. Gravel in the bottom gives good drainage.

3. Place your cutting in the soil so that two-thirds to seven-eighths of it is beneath the soil. Leaving 1 inch above the soil is enough. Be sure there is a bud or leaf growing aboveground.

4. Explain that three to five cuttings may be put into one can since some cuttings may not live.

If several root, they can be separated and set into pots or set out to grow as one plant.

5. Most cuttings can be made and grown any time of the year. It may be difficult to protect cuttings from cold if they are set out from July 15 to December 1. January, February, March and early April generally are the best months for growing cuttings. When you can get the kind of cuttings you want, accept them and take a chance.



CARE OF CUTTINGS

1. Show how to water cuttings from the top without wetting the leaves.
2. Show how to set the pot or can into water and explain that although this is not absolutely necessary, it is a good way to keep the stems and leaves dry and the roots moist. Damp leaves become diseased more readily than dry leaves.
3. Explain that moist well-drained soils of all kinds root cuttings much better than soggy wet soils.
4. Remind your audience that they can test for moisture by digging to see whether the soil is damp beneath the surface. If you find moisture, do not water.
5. Tell how easy it is to water too much and kill the plants. Once a week is usually enough to water them except in hot dry weather.
6. Explain that plants in half-shade grow better than in full sun.
7. Caution your audience to protect the plants from wind, intense sun and cold. Coldframes, hotbeds, slat houses or hothouses often are used.
8. Explain that cuttings made in late summer and early fall may have to be kept indoors to avoid cold injury to tender leaves and twigs. When frost and heavy winds are over, the plants may be set outside.

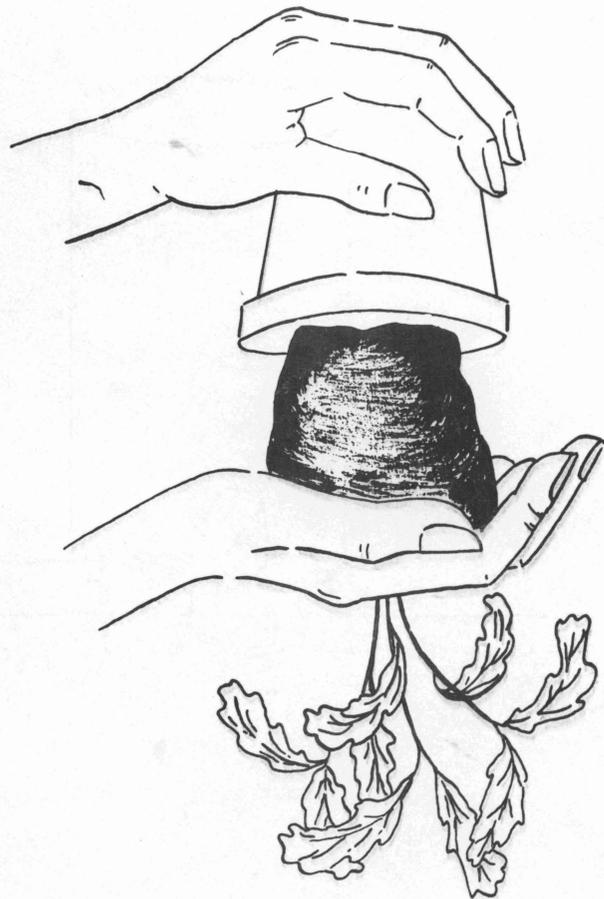
TRANSPLANTING CUTTINGS

Explain that: (1) Plants grown in pots or cans may be set into the open ground during spring and summer. All the roots can be saved in one unbroken piece of soil. Water and fertilize as you would to grow a vegetable or flower garden. (2) Plants grown outside in pots or

cans may be set out any month when they are accustomed to outside conditions.

Here you might show how to remove a plant with soil held about the roots. Cut the soil around the edges of the pot with a knife. Place the stem of the young plant between the first and second fingers, then hold the hand firmly against the top of the pot and turn the pot upside down.

If the soil does not fall out, tap the bottom of the pot. Set the plant immediately into the soil where it is to grow.



DISCUSSION AND PARTICIPATION

Have the members of your group (1) discuss how they can use this demonstration; (2) discuss where they can get shrub cuttings which they would like to grow; (3) exchange experiences in growing plants from cuttings; (4) consider plants as gifts for birthdays; (5) discuss how plants increase in value each year; (6) when cuttings should be set to be ready for Christmas gifts.

Encourage the members of the group to (1) choose cutting wood, (2) make cuttings, (3) set them out, (4) water them, (5) plan for protection from wind, sun and animals and (6) mulch to hold moisture.

This demonstration can be given in a few minutes if the leader plans in advance. Practice at least once before going to the meeting; then pack ahead of time everything needed. For a longer demonstration, get a copy of *MS-211, Making Cutting Beds*. The outdoor cutting bed is convenient for growing a large number of cuttings.

References for Study:

FB-1567, Propagation of Shrubs and Trees, 20 cents from Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C., or available at county Extension agent offices.

Ask at your library for books on growing shrubs and trees from cuttings.

