

## Topsy Turvy™ Instructions

Don't be fooled by its unusual appearance—this upside-down planter is not a novelty. Hang it from your deck, porch or a tree branch and you'll harvest ripe tomatoes without cages, stakes or weeding! The Topsy Turvy works well for cucumbers, peppers, herbs and flowers too.

Upside-down growing lets you tend and harvest without bending. Watering and fertilizing is easy too. After planting, just mix a water-soluble fertilizer with water and pour it in the planter's special top funnel.

Vegetables growing upside down will "curl up" toward the sun. This creates fun, unusual-looking plants. Flowers grown in the Topsy Turvy will "curl upward" too, taking on different appearances and looking almost like new varieties. We hope you have a lot of fun and success with the Topsy Turvy!

### Step 1. Prepare Planting Mix

The Topsy Turvy holds approximately 20 quarts of planting mix, depending on the size and number of plants you are growing. We recommend using a good growing mix comprised of sphagnum

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**Tools Needed for Assembly:** Drill with  $\frac{3}{16}$ " drill bit.

### List of Parts:

1. **Heavy Duty Galvanized Screw Hook** (packed loose)
2. **Plated Steel Metal Top Swivel** (attached to three hanging wires)
3. **Three Woven Stainless Steel Hanging Wires** (attached to end of bottom end of swivel, with three stainless steel crosspins at ends of wires.)
4. **Vertical Grow Bag**
5. **Top Plastic Ring with Fluted Edge** (fits over top of bag).
6. **Bottom Plastic Piece** (This goes down inside bottom of grow bag with circular center ring going through hole in bottom of bag.)
7. **Two Circular Foam Rings** (These are placed inside bag at intervals.)
8. **One Circular Split Foam** (fits on shelf located inside bottom plastic piece protruding through bottom of bag)

peat, perlite and vermiculite. (see Ordering Information for our Self-Watering Container Mix.)

In a separate container, moisten the planting mix thoroughly before filling the grow bag. The mix should be very wet.

### **Step 2. Add Fertilizer to Mix**

We recommend using a slow release, granular fertilizer such as our Tomato Fertilizer or All-Purpose Fertilizer. Follow the fertilizer label instructions to add the amount of fertilizer required by the type and number of plants you are growing. Thoroughly mix the fertilizer into the premoistened planting mix. Set the mix aside.

### **Step 3. Screw Hook Installation**

You have been provided with a heavy duty galvanized Screw Hook which will hold the weight of the grow bag when the plant has matured.

**Carefully follow this step to safely and securely install the Screw Hook and additional hanging hardware.**

Do not try to hang the Topsy Turvy from a ceiling made of plywood or other lightweight material. It won't hold the weight!

The heavy duty Screw Hook should be placed into solid wood overhead. You must use at least a 2x4 dimensional solid wood board (available at lumber supply stores). If you are drilling through thin wood or dry wall, make sure the screw

is firmly seated at least 1¼" deep into a stud or other solid wood piece.

Use a drill with a 3/16" drill bit to drill a pilot hole for the Screw Hook. (Be certain there is no electrical wiring underneath where you are drilling.) Using pliers or a long screwdriver for leverage (turned crossways through the screw hook), twist the Screw Hook into the pilot hole, making sure that all the threads on the Screw Hook have entered into the wood. No threads should be showing on the Screw Hook.

### **Step 4. Planting**

Hang the Topsy Turvy where you can easily get to the interior of the bag to plant. You can do this by laying a broomstick across two chairs or across the corner of a deck railing to hang the Topsy Turvy off the ground.

The Topsy Turvy is not designed to grow plants from seed. It is made to accept plants that are ready for transplanting outdoors. Select 1 or 2 plants and gently loosen the root ball. Set the plant aside.

***Tip #1: The Topsy Turvy will easily hold two tomato plants side by side, upside-down. They will grow out the bottom of the grow bag with great results.***

Remove the Top Plastic Funnel Insert Piece from the Topsy Turvy. Next, reach down inside and remove the Two Foam Rings and the Split Foam Circle out of the Bottom Plastic Piece.

Pass the root ball of your plant up through the hole in the Bottom Plastic Piece. Once the plant is up inside the bag, “trap” the stem (below the root ball) with the Split Foam. Next, lower the Split Foam back onto the Bottom Plastic Piece “shelf area”. The Split Foam should hold your plant in place while you fill the planter with planting mix.

**Tip #2: If you are growing tomatoes, place the root ball as far up inside the bag as it will go, bringing the leaf area of the plant right up to the bottom of the Topsy Turvy. Tomato plants develop roots along their entire stem. With most of the stem buried in the planting mix inside the grow bag, the tomato plant will develop a strong root system.**

Carefully place the wet planting mix inside the grow bag by hand. Firmly fill in all the lower open areas with the mix. Be sure all air pockets below are carefully filled in.

When the grow bag is filled one-third up from the bottom of the bag, place one of the Circular Foam Rings on top of the mix. These Foam Rings keep water and fertilizer properly distributed and, when soil occasionally gets too dry, will prevent water from running through too fast.

Keep adding wet planting mix until the grow bag is two-thirds full. Firmly fill in all air pockets, then place in the other Circular Foam Rings on top of the mix. Finish filling the grow bag with

the wet mix, leaving a two-inch air space at the very top.

### **Step 5. Hanging Instructions**

Replace the Top Plastic Funnel Insert Piece and hang the Topsy Turvy on the previously mounted Screw Hook.

If you want to hang the Topsy Turvy so that it is lower to the ground, you may use an “S” hook and a piece of chain cut to the desired length (both available at hardware stores). Be sure the chain and the “S” hook are rated to hold at least 75 pounds. A strong nylon rope, properly knotted, can also be used for this purpose. (Be sure to replace the nylon rope annually.)

### **Step 6. Water and Fertilizer**

The Topsy Turvy requires frequent watering and regular applications of water-soluble fertilizer. If you’re growing tomatoes, be aware that a full grown, mature plant loaded with tomatoes will require at least one gallon of water every day. Water and fertilize through the top funnel.

Fertilizer requirements will vary depending on the number and type of plants you are growing in the Topsy Turvy. For tomatoes and other vegetables, we recommend weekly applications of our water-soluble Plant Health Care (PHC) for Tomatoes and Vegetables. For flowers, we recommend our PHC for Flowers. (See *Ordering Information* on the back of this bulletin.)

***Ordering Information***

- #36-450 ..... Topsy Turvy
- #33-819 ..... Self-Watering Container Mix
- #07-200 ..... Tomato Fertilizer, 5 lb
- #32-532 ..... All-Purpose Fertilizer (5-5-5), 1 lb
- #31-291 ..... Plant Health Care for Vegetables and Tomatoes, 4 lb

*To place an order, please call us or visit our web site for current prices.*