



HOW TO MAKE A SIMPLE SEED BALL

SEED BALLS, OR BOMBS, are a simple and easy planting method. It's said that Japanese farmer, **Masanobu Fukuoka**, created seed balls which became a popular method for growing plants in areas that were difficult to farm. Today, "guerrilla" gardeners use seed balls to establish seeds in neglected areas where they'd like to see plants grow.

You don't need to spread them around to areas that are difficult to farm, feel free to make them and have your kids plant them in pots or open spaces in your yard and watch what comes up.



Photo courtesy of PermaCultured

HOW SEED BALLS WORK:

Compost and clay protects the seeds from drying out, washing away or being eaten by birds. As the weather breaks down the seed ball, the compost and clay will help the seed to root and grow.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Large bowl
- Compost (you can pick up a bag of compost from your local nursery or garden store)
- Powdered clay (available from art stores and needed to hold the balls together and keep them moist)
- Water
- Seeds. Choose seeds that are native to the area you live, a wildflower mix will be most successful as there are plants that thrive under different conditions, or harvest seeds from the plants growing around you.
- Wax paper or other non-stick paper to dry the seed balls on.
- Box to store seed balls

RECIPE:

The best ratio is **four (4) parts compost** to **one (1) part powdered clay by weight**. You'll need just enough water for the compost to be slightly moist, but not wet.

Directions for making the seed balls:

- Measure **four (4) parts compost** to **one (1) part powdered clay** into a bowl
- Mix your compost and clay together, hands work best for this job!
- Add your seeds. The compost/clay mixture should surround the seeds, so don't put in too many.
- Add water very slowly and gradually. Use only enough to make your mixture the consistency of clay. Don't let it get too wet.
- Roll small amounts of the mixture into marble-sized balls.
- Place them in your box, on a piece of wax or non-stick paper to dry for 24 to 48 hours.

Now that you've got seed balls – here's when to plant them, and where!

- Seed balls can be planted in either spring or fall.
- Find a bare area where nothing is growing, or a pot that you want to put the seed ball in.
- If planting somewhere other than your own yard, be sure to have the owner's permission.
- Toss the seed balls in the area, or if putting in a pot outdoors, set on top of the soil.
- After each rain you should see the seed balls start breaking down.
- Once the balls start disappearing, check for seedlings.

Planting seed bombs is a long-term project. You may see seedlings in the fall or next spring, and flowers in the spring or summer. Once your wildflowers bloom, sit back and watch the pollinators visit.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

