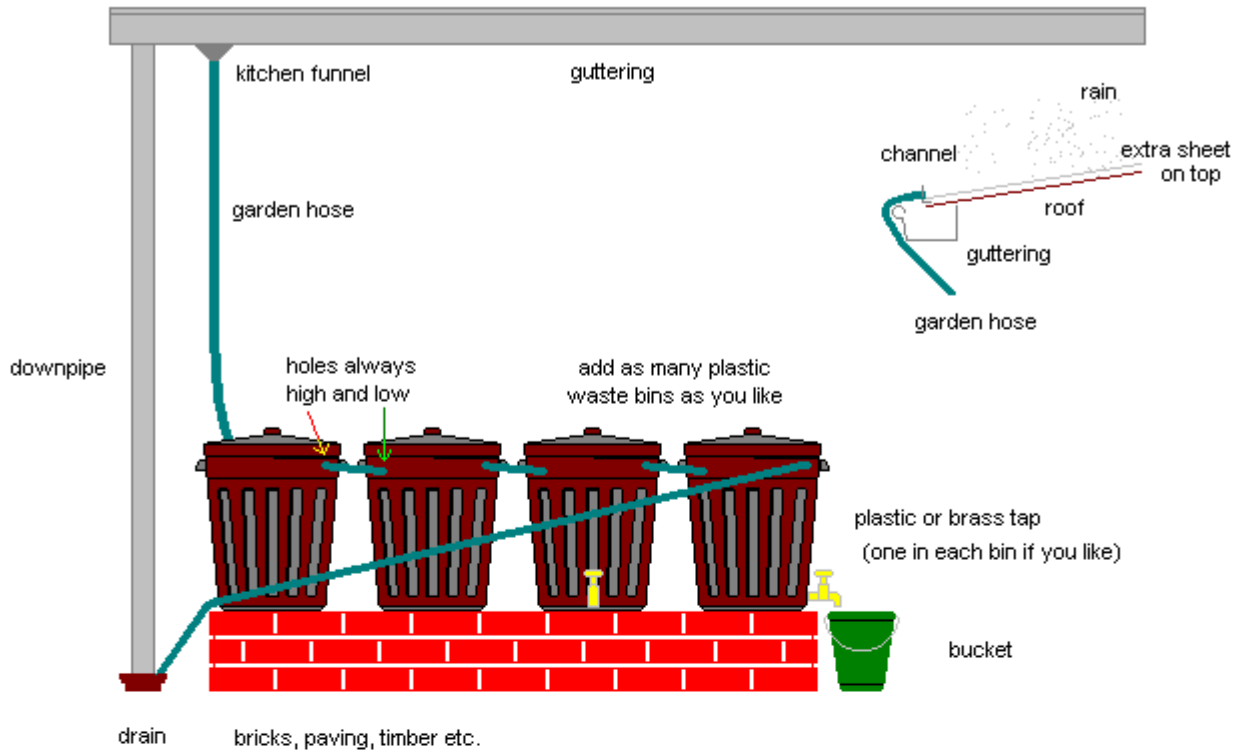
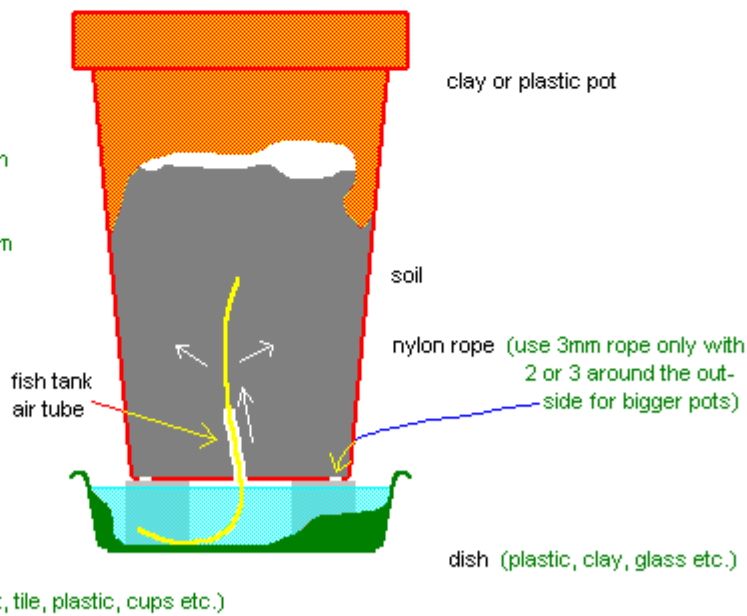


a hole can be drilled into the guttering or the hose run over it to another sheet of roofing iron



**~ Expandable Water Supply ~**

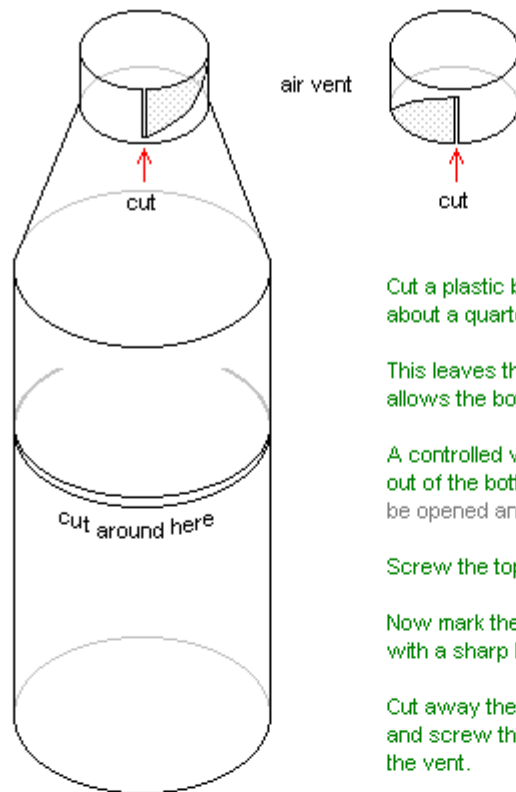
(The higher you want the water delivered, the more fish tank air tube you should slip over the nylon rope to avoid water dispersion at the bottom of the clay or plastic pot.)



**~ Self-Watering Pot ~**

Water is drawn by capillary action, up the nylon rope and into the soil, keeping it moist for months in winter. In summer, use more dish capacity or more watering.

(Watering can be every two days in full summer sun to every month or two for indoor plants in winter.)



P.E.T. bottles will last in full sun long enough to see plants grow and be transplanted to gardens.

That means at least one year, but they will last for many years.

Cut a plastic bottle three-quarters of the way around, about a quarter to half way down the side.

This leaves the top still attached to the bottom, but allows the bottle to be opened easily.

A controlled vent can be made by cutting a section out of the bottle's thread and top. Then the vent can be opened and closed by screwing the top around.

Screw the top until it is on, but not tight.

Now mark the top and the bottle and cut them through with a sharp knife.

Cut away the shaded sections in the neck and top and screw the top on the bottle to open and close the vent.

~ Mini Herbarium ~

The origin of these ideas lies in using unwanted plastic wisely rather than creating more landfill for no gain.

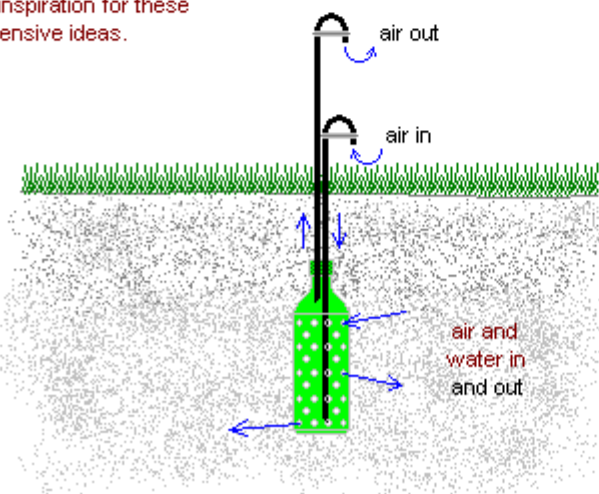
Drawing water from many different sources in Third World countries was the main inspiration for these inexpensive ideas.

Drill holes in a plastic bottle all around the side.

Push two sprinkler risers through the top, then bend them over and hold with plastic string.

Put fine nylon mesh over the tops of the tubes to stop spiders and insects getting into them.

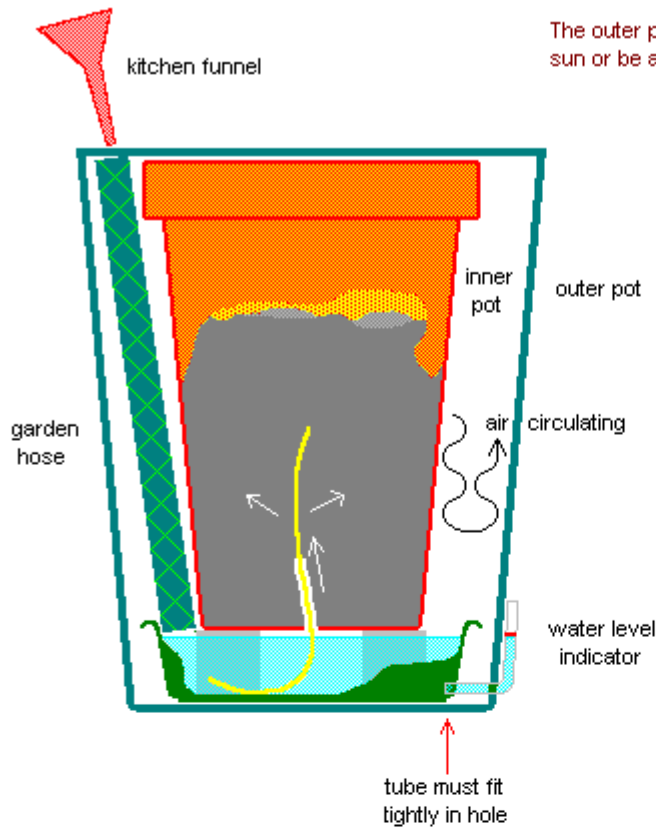
Bury the bottle as deep as you need to soak or aerate the soil under the surface.



When it rains, the water is stored underground temporarily,

When it's fine, air is circulated up through the top tube and down through the bottom one.

~ Ground Aerator ~



The outer pot should be able to tolerate full sun or be anything suitable for indoor plants.

Put a self-watering pot inside a larger one to prevent full sunlight from drying the soil out in less than one day.

The larger one can be clay, plastic or decorative ceramic, while the plant can grow over the tops of both pots.

Drill a 5mm hole in the water dish and push a short piece of 6mm fish tank tube into it and up the outside of the outer pot for a water level indicator.

Place a piece of garden hose between the outer and inner pots. A kitchen funnel can be inserted into the top of it to assist with watering.

This can allow watering to be done every few weeks instead of days.

**~ Air-Conditioned Pot ~**

Of course, plastic is not environmentally friendly because it lasts a long time, rather than break down with no sun. That is exactly what is required here to allow some of these items to keep on working for a great many years.

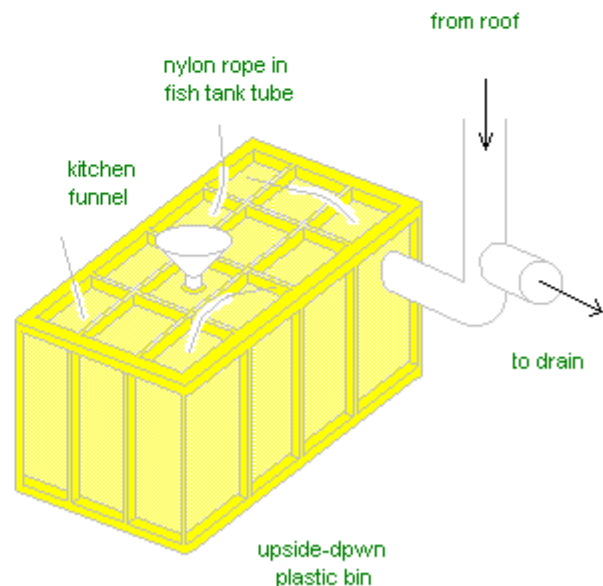
Dig a large plastic bin into the ground, leaving at least 200mm or more of topsoil on top of it.

Placing joists of metal or timber on top also help to strengthen it if foot traffic occurs above it.

Nylon ropes inside fish tank tubes, projecting from the bottom of the bin will transfer the temporary water supply to root systems around the bin.

Place this bin next to a tree with the downpipe from a building's guttering running into it. The overflow should come directly from a junction outside the bin.

This can also feed the expandable water supply before it finally goes into a drain.



**~ Underground Reservoir ~**

Place an old sheet of galvanised iron on a frame of water pipes or two rows of old bricks - one at each end and one higher than the other.

If the galvanised iron has been painted, strip that off so the sheet is bare.

Lay fibreglass fly screens on top of the galvanised sheet. Tying them down isn't necessary.

Spread used pet litter on the fly screens and let full sun and rain wash it clean for at least three days.

When it is ready, put it back in the litter box to be used hundreds of times.

One of my cats had a good sniff to see if it was acceptable - and then stepped right in and did his business.

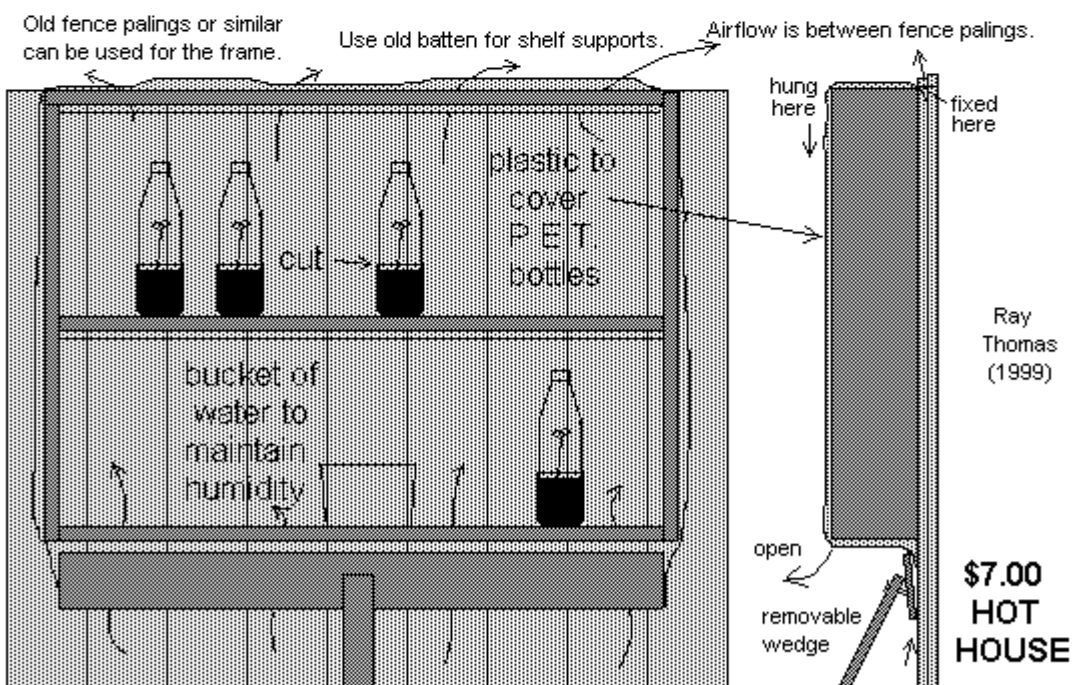
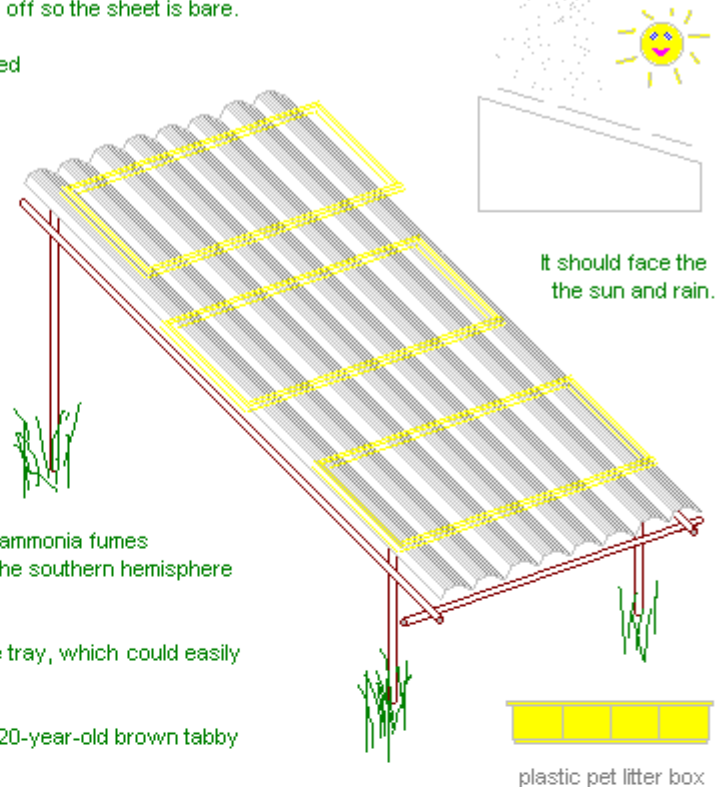
Obviously, there was some odour, but it certainly wasn't what it was before.

Find a quiet, previously unused place where the ammonia fumes can dissipate into the atmosphere to the east (in the southern hemisphere and west for the northern hemisphere.)

A large, low-walled plastic box was used for the tray, which could easily be washed out with disinfectant many times.

One \$8.00 bag of pet litter lasted 1 year until my 20-year-old brown tabby just couldn't live any longer.

~ Pet Litter Drying Rack ~



This design was created and built in 1999 and is still hanging on the back fence at home. It only cost \$7.00 to buy some old timber from a salvage yard and new plastic sheet from a hardware store. I think I had the brackets and screws in a shed already. All the self-watering pots can go inside if there is some ventilation.

These ideas have been supplied by Ray Thomas ([rwt@trump.net.au](mailto:rwt@trump.net.au)) for free and should not be used for profit outside of Third World countries, land rehabilitation and other community groups in councils, schools, community and Open Gardens etc. (1 Sept. 2005)