

Fun with Turtles & My Favorite



Written by: Kevin Milaeger
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This year at Milaeger's we're repeating a fun planting project that we first did a few years ago—a moss covered turtle, planted with succulents. It's a great project for any age, including kids. We have many different succulent plants to choose from, so the possibilities are nearly endless. Many different colors, leaf shapes and sizes, and textures. We furnish you with a moss turtle and soil. You choose your favorite plants, and plant them in our greenhouse. We'll help if needed. The finished turtles are meant to be enjoyed outdoors during the warmer months. In winter you can display your turtle in a sunny window where it will continue to grow. Last winter I stored mine in an unheated garage for the winter, and it survived just fine. I think it would have been happier indoors, but our cat won't leave it alone if I bring it in the house.



Moss Turtle Planter



Turtle one year after planting

This project doesn't take a lot of time to complete. You should be finished within half an hour. The hardest part is picking out your favorite plants. The moss turtle is about 16" long, 8" wide, and 6" tall. It has spaces for seven plants.

Some years ago we sold an all metal turtle, also with holes in the back for plants. I still have mine, so last spring I planted it up with succulents and it looked great all summer. After storing it in my garage for the winter, it's now outside enjoying our lovely spring weather. I might take it back in if it gets really cold. For now, it seems to be enjoying the fresh air. I see one plant looks a little weak. If it doesn't come 'round I'll replace it.

You can find the details for the turtle planter event on our website, under "events." [Here is a direct link](#). It'll be a fun evening, with complimentary wine.



Kevin's old metal turtle



Succulents

Getting back into the garden in spring reminds me of my favorite garden tool. I think it's one you probably don't have, but if you had it I think you'd use it for most every garden project. It's a small shovel. It was introduced to me years ago by an employee of ours. Maybe you remember her, her name is Anne McNitt. She taught me the virtues of the tool, and I've been using it regularly for over 25 years now. The spade, or working end of the shove is just the right size when you want to dig a hole for a plant that's in a 5" or 7" pot. At that size, a

hand trowel isn't big enough and a regular shovel is too big, and too heavy and unwieldy. That's especially true if you're working on your knees. The small shovel weighs under 2.5 pounds, and a regular shovel weighs over 3.75 pounds. The size of the small spade is about 6" wide by 8" long, and a regular large shovel is about 8.5" wide and 11.5" long. Lastly the little shovel is only 40" tall and a regular shovel is nearly 5' tall. Being so light and compact, it's perfect for most any garden chore except planting trees and shrubs. It'd make a great gift for a gardening friend.



Kevin with this old shovel



New shovel

Please email me (kevin@milaegers.com) with your questions and comments!

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