

Tipsy Pots

By: Dottie Baltz

Gary saw this clay pot tower in someone's yard on his way home from work. I found some limited instructions online, and learned that they were called Tipsy Pots. Here's what we did to put one together.



First we cleared a spot in the lawn that was a pain to mow. It's next to the deck on our screen house, which needed some more color to make it more inviting. After removing the sod, we drove a **66" long** piece of ½" re-rod (rebar) into the soil **two feet**, then surrounded the rod with newspaper to help prevent weeds from coming up through the mulch. It's important to pound the rod into the soil at least two feet so that the rod will support the weight of the pots when full. Then we placed a 12" round clay pot at the base, threading the re-rod through the drainage hole. You must fill the pot full of soil at this point so that the next pot has something to sit on. Press the soil down and water it in to firm it up a bit. We decided to use 10" pots for the remainder of the tower, although you can also use pots in ascending sizes. Thread the second pot through it's drainage hole and tilt it to one side so that the base of the 10" pot is resting on the soil.



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The next three pots will be threaded onto the rod and tilted on opposite sides of each other so that the weight is distributed evenly. These three pots will have their bottoms resting on the rim of the pot below as illustrated in the above photos. When planting, make sure you leave a 1" to 1-1/2" space at the top of each pot so that when you water, the soil does not run out of the pot along with the water. I found that mulching the tops of the pots will help prevent this also. I prefer to mulch clay pots anyway to help conserve moisture as clay pots tend to dry out quickly in the summer heat. When watering, water slowly, allowing the water to be absorbed by the soil before adding more water. A layer of mulch on the ground, over the newspaper finishes it off beautifully.

I chose to use Proven Winner annuals in the pots. They are, from top to bottom:

- Container #1 - [Helichrysum petiolare 'Licorice Splash'](#), [Lobelia hybrid 'Laguna Sky Blue'](#), and [Agryranthemum frutescens Marguerite Daisy 'Butterfly'](#)
- Container #2 - [Ageratum hybrid 'Artist Purple'](#) and [Sutera cordata 'Cabana'](#)
- Container #3 - [Lantana camara 'Tropical Fruit'](#), [Diascia hybrid 'Flying colors Coral'](#), and [Cuphea rosea 'New light Lavender'](#)
- Container #4 - [Scaevola Australian Fan Flower 'Whirlwind Blue'](#) and [Calibrachoa hybrid 'Superbells Pink Kiss'](#)
- Container #5 - Ipomoea Sweet Potato Vine 'Tricolor'

Notes: In recent years, I have discovered that some pots may be taller than other clay pots even though the diameter of the pot may be the same. You may need to add as much as 12" more to the rod to make this plant tower. You can always pound the rebar into the soil more than 2' if you find you have some leftover. If you discover after the fact that you don't have enough rebar, just use one less pot on the tower. It will still look great!

In 2007, I made a variation of this idea by stacking tea pots together on a rod. It's so colorful, it doesn't even need plants.

