



HYPERTUFA WORKSHOP

About Hypertufa

Hypertufa planters will bring the look of stone into your garden. Hypertufa is a cement type of mixture that is used as a substitute for real tufa, which is a porous type of limestone. Real tufa is much more expensive and heavier than hypertufa.

Hypertufa was invented for use in alpine gardens, where gardeners originally used antique animal watering troughs, which became rare and expensive. Hypertufa looks very similar to tufa and is easy to make. Although it can be a little messy, it's also a lot of fun and the things you can make from it are only limited by your imagination. Hypertufa planters are the most popular and one of the simplest uses of hypertufa. You can also create stepping stones, birdbaths, and just about anything you can mold or shape. Are you ready to begin?

What To Use As A Mold

You can buy molds for making hypertufa planters, stepping stones and other creations, but you can also utilize other types of containers. Plastic and Styrofoam are the best choices for molds because the hypertufa will not stick to them the way it can to wood or metal. If you want to form your hypertufa in something like a metal bowl, place plastic between the metal and the mixture.

Look around your home. You are almost assured of finding a container to use as your mold. If the container you plan on using is something you want to be able to use in the future, cover it with plastic to protect it. The plastic will create impressions in your finished hypertufa planter or stepping stone, but the impressions will only add to the beauty of the finished piece.

Suggestions for molds include: old plastic planters, plastic shoe boxes, plastic or metal tubs, bowls, old baking dishes, plastic or metal cake molds, aluminum disposable baking pans, plastic tubs, planter saucers, cardboard boxes, etc.

Note: When selecting your mold, please be aware, the top of the container you select to use as a mold must have a larger or equal opening as the bottom. This will ensure that the hypertufa will come out easily. The sides and bottom of your container will be approximately an inch thick, keep this in mind when selecting your container to ensure that there will be ample space for potting soil and plants. If the container you select has a pattern on the inside or if you line it with a plastic bag, the pattern or creases from the plastic bag will add dimension to the outside of the cured hypertufa.

Click the following link to check out the photos from the 2021 Hypertufa Workshop for additional ideas on selecting your mold.

<https://www.sanclementegardenclub.com/2021-hypertufa-workshop>

What To Bring To The Workshop

Latex/Plastic Gloves:	If you do not have any, there will be some available.
Face Mask:	The fine, powder cement should not be breathed in, protect your lungs.
Glasses:	To ensure you do not get anything into your eyes.
Mold:	A container to use as a form for your planter
Apron or Wear Old Clothing:	You do not want to get the hypertufa mixture on your clothing.
Cardboard Box:	It is beneficial to place your bagged mold in a cardboard box to stabilize it for transportation and as it cures.
Workshop Fee:	\$5.00 Workshop Fee
Optional:	Stones, shells, tiles and other objects to add visual interest

How To Create Your Hypertufa Planter

1. **Mix dry ingredients** (Cement, Peat Moss & Perlite). Be sure any clumps are broken down. It's best to use a plastic dishpan or shallow pan with smooth sides to mix (these will be provided). Wear gloves/mask/glasses. Cement is a fine powder and should not be breathed in.
 - 1 part Portland Cement
 - 1 part Peat Moss
 - 1 part Perlite
2. **Slowly add water** and mix several minutes to the consistency of cottage cheese or thick cookie dough. The mix should not be too wet.
3. **Spray cooking spray** on the mold as a release agent or you can cover your mold with plastic wrap, dry cleaner clothing covers or a plastic bag.
4. **Pack tightly** into the mold and 'tap' on the table to get any air bubbles out.
5. **Poke holes** in the bottom or use a wine cork for drainage.
6. For stability, make the bottom and sides of the hypertufa planter about **an inch thick**.
7. **Stones, shells, tiles, and other objects** can be pressed into wet Hypertufa.
8. **Place in heavy duty trash bag** when finished and let **cure for 4 weeks or longer**. This allows the concrete to "cure" slowly.
9. **Remove hypertufa from mold**.
10. **Optional:** Brush with a wire brush for a rougher finish or you can leave it as is for a smoother finish.
11. **Wait at least 2 weeks after removing from the mold before planting.**