

Outdoor Tool Storage

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Overview: Create a storage place to have your tools ready for outdoor learning. The storage will give students easy access to garden tools and outdoor supplies, and it will also facilitate both ease of instruction and student exploration.

Target Grades: K-12

Materials needed: Large locking bin with lid that fits tightly, clipboards, pencils, magnifying glasses, bug collectors, small jars, small shovels, trowels, gloves, chalk, string, thermometers, rulers, etc. Tools should be tailored to your lesson needs. The inner lid of the box could be painted with blackboard paint (or fitted with a painted board) to use as a writing surface.

Other possibilities would be posting an old mailbox near the garden to hold several small hand tools.

Other Potential Connections: The following list provides a general overview of other possible uses for Outdoor Tool Storage.

Science – Have tools at hand that the students need to complete lessons outdoors. For example, you may need to use the small shovels or trowels if you are digging for worms, or chalk if you are studying shadows so that students can trace their shadow and see how it moves throughout the day.

Math – Tools could be used to measure rainfall, temperature, wind direction, and growth of plants.

ELA – Students may not be familiar with some of the tools (i.e. a hoe, a magnifying glass, a shovel, and a pail), so you may have to backload this information and be explicit in explaining the identity of the tool is and its purpose. A language translation dictionary might be placed in the tool box if you have ELL students.

Social Studies – Students could research the history of some of these tools and how they are used in various cultures.

Art – Art supplies might also be kept in the outdoor box.

Considerations: Tools should be selected to fit the specific needs of your lessons.

Engagement and Community Involvement: Some of the most meaningful learning activities are the ones that allow for community and parental involvement. Outdoor Tool Storage could be used to promote community engagement in the following way:

- Home Connection - ask for donations and crafts supplies to create a container that is visually pleasing for the students. Families might also donate tools needed to fill your box.



Sample of an outdoor tool storage container. Photo by Sarah Dos Santos and Kim McGettigan.

For more information, contact ctgreenleaf@ctgreenschools.org

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