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### Seedling update: Window boxes, hanging planter all set for planting

Beth Botts The Chicago Gardener

Tribune reporter

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The seedlings in the kitchen window are still looking mighty spindly (next year, lights). But the fancy window boxes and upside-down planters are installed. Sure, I turned the dining room table into a paint shop for the lumber. I bought more hardware doodads and drilled more holes than would have been necessary had I clearly understood what I was doing. And it took a while, because I had to take breaks to make sure Johnny Danks still had a shutout going. But I'll be ready for those cherry tomato seedlings in a few weeks.



*Learning gardens:* Freelance writer and mother of two Anne Nagro of Gurnee feels like she reinvented the wheel over and over as she and others got a 5-year-old gardening program for 2nd-graders going at Woodland Elementary School in Gages Lake. To give others a better start, she created a Web site, [gardenABCs.com](http://gardenABCs.com), to share stories, advice, ideas and encouragement from teachers and volunteers working on teaching gardens. Chicago has other resources: GreenNet ([Greennet.chicago.org](http://Greennet.chicago.org)) is a coalition of agencies and groups that support community and school gardens; the University of Illinois Extension musters many volunteers ([www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/hort/index.html](http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/hort/index.html)). And the National Gardening Association has a lot of information on gardening with children at [kidsgardening.com](http://kidsgardening.com).

*Dwat that wabbit:* Every spring, people ask me, "How do I keep rabbits from eating my plants?" Answer: Sorry, but there is no easy, simple and permanent way. A small-mesh fence — a couple of feet tall and partly buried to deter burrowing — comes closest. Products sold in garden centers or homemade potions such as chili pepper give a plant an unpleasant taste or odor so rabbits will turn to another plant. But you must reapply them regularly and switch them so bunnies don't get used to them and shrug them off. Begin training young rabbits to avoid your favorite plants in spring before they get set in their ways. Or surrender and plant extra so the rabbits can have some.

[ebotts@tribune.com](mailto:ebotts@tribune.com)

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