

Window Herb Box

This activity will give you the opportunity to create your own window herb box.

- An egg carton
- Cling film
- Potting mix
- Seed packets- good suggestions are basil, mint and rosemary
- Lollipop sticks (to use as markers)

Herbs have been used for thousands and thousands of years by people. It used to be common for people to use herbs for food and for healing sick people. Your parents will probably have some dried herbs in the kitchen cupboards to be used in cooking, or you may have some in your garden. Some such as lavender have a nice scent and are used in toiletries.

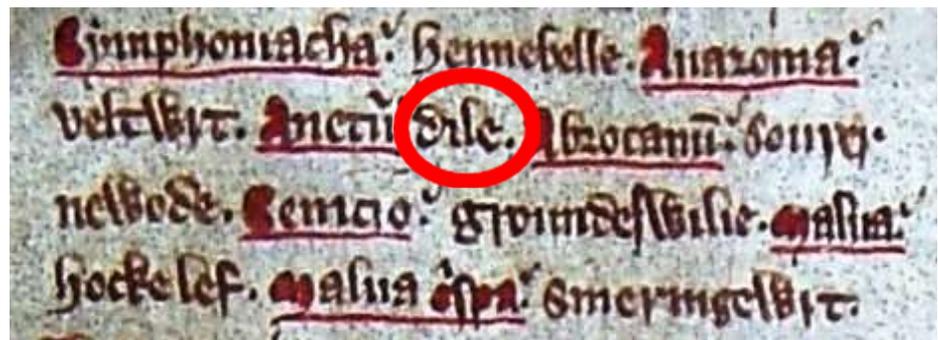
Worcester Cathedral Library holds many manuscripts and historical documents. Most are religious texts, but some provide details of life in the Middle Ages.

Hidden at the end of one manuscript is a list of plants and an explanation of their uses, written in both Middle English and Latin. Many of them are herbs, to be used

as medicines and food flavourings. Herbs were a very important part of any monastic garden.

One of the herbs is written as *Dile* in Middle English, which we now call Dill. The manuscript records that Dill was used as a flavouring for food, but could also be used as a herbal remedy for indigestion and could even help cure common coughs and colds. The manuscript also mentions *Alexandria*, which we know as horse parsley, as well as a record for Saffron which comes from the Crocus flower.

Inspired by this manuscript, why not have a go at making your own mini herb garden? You don't need to have a large garden; a sunny windowsill will do just as well!



Dile=Dill

The Latin name is Anetum and is underlined and written before the Middle English.

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Making your window herb box:

1. The first thing you need to do is ensure that there is good drainage for the seeds. With adult help, make some holes in the bottom of each space in the egg carton.
2. To help reduce mess, the top of the egg carton can be used as a drainage tray. Remove the top of the egg carton, and line it with the cling film. You may want to tape it down at the edges. You can then have the egg carton sitting within the lid.
3. Now you need to fill each segment with your potting mix. Using your finger, you can make a hole for the seeds to sit in. Follow the instructions on the back of the seed packets.
4. Now you need to water them, using a spray bottle is best as not to over water them. But a watering can will be fine, just a little bit of water.
5. Once watered, you need to label what you have planted. Why not use lollipop sticks?
6. Now you can cover the egg carton in clingfilm and find a nice spot for them. A kitchen windowsill is a good spot, but any sunny windowsill will do.
7. You can remove the clingfilm once the seedlings start to poke through the soil but make sure you water whenever the soil is dry.
8. Once the herbs are more established, you can start using them. Snip and use often to encourage new growth!

