DIY, short for do-it-yourself, is the idea of making things instead of buying them. DIYing can save you money and is a way to lessen your environmental impact. We often throw away food, household items, and recyclable materials that could be used for another purpose.

Aside from the physical benefits of DIYing, there are many individual benefits\(^1\) including:

- Developing an appreciation for the things that we have, where those things come from, and who makes those things
- Using your hands and brain to make something
- Connecting with others who also DIY or who are interested in what you are DIYing
- Earning money or reducing expenses though selling your DIY projects or replacing things that you would normally buy with DIY items

Most Americans purchase food from a store instead of growing their own food. In this DIY activity, you and your family will explore how to regrow fruits and vegetables from produce scraps.

**MATERIALS AND INSTRUCTIONS**\(^2\)

Materials (any of the below, depending on which vegetables you want to try to regrow):
- Any of the vegetable scraps listed below
- Shallow dishes, glasses or small vases
- Water

Instructions - Leafy Vegetables that Grow on Heads (Celery, Romaine, Bok Choy) [Easy difficulty]
1. Cut the edible portion of the vegetables from the base, which you wouldn’t normally eat, leaving about 1 inch left on the base.
2. Place the base cut side up in a shallow saucer or bowl with ½ inch of water.
3. Place sauce on a sunny indoor windowsill. Replenish water regularly and watch the greens grow.
4. Once the scraps have created new roots, they can be planted in soil if desired. Simply plant the roots and base but leave the new leaves above the soil.

Instructions - Bulb and Bulb-like Vegetables (Green Onions, Leeks, Fennel, Lemongrass, Garlic) [Easy to medium difficulty]
1. Cut the green portion of the vegetable from the lighter colored base, leaving about 1 inch left.
2. Place the root end in a glass or small vase. Add ½ inch of water.
3. Place glass or vase on a sunny windowsill.
4. Replace water regularly and watch shoots grow.

Instructions - Root Crops and Root-like Vegetables (Carrots, Turnips, Beets) [Easy to medium difficulty]
1. Cut off the top but leave ½ inch of the vegetable attached
2. Place the scrap in shallow water, cut side down and leaf end up.
3. Place on a sunny windowsill.
4. Replace water regularly and watch leaves grow.

**NOTE:** root crops and root-like vegetables will only regrow leaves, not the actual root vegetable. Leaves can be sauteed with other vegetables or eaten raw in a salad.

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\(^1\) [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/home-diy-the-courage-to-s_b_589371?guccounter=1](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/home-diy-the-courage-to-s_b_589371?guccounter=1)

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

1. Create an observation journal and answer the questions: What has changed since yesterday? How does the plant look?
2. Why are we able to grow vegetables from their scraps?
   a. When vegetables are harvested for us to eat, they are still alive. By placing them in water and providing them with sunlight, they are able to regrow roots and leaves, which is what they would have continued to do if they were not harvested for us to eat. Growing from scraps is just a continuation of the plant’s life cycle.
3. What other vegetables might you try to grow from scraps? Do you think that you’ll be able to grow them successfully? Why or why not?
4. How is growing vegetables from scraps beneficial?
   a. Cost savings - you don’t have to buy the vegetable from the store when you grow it yourself.
   b. Environmental impact - you reduce waste when you reuse things, including vegetable scraps. Agriculture accounts for 30% of the global environmental impact and we waste 30-40% of our food supply in the US.
   c. Educational - by regrowing food from scraps, we learn the science behind how plants grow.