

"Creative Edging"

*William Kollar & Amanda Pace

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There are so many ways to border a new planting area. You can use rock, steel edging, short fencing, wood, brick, or plant material like mondo grass. The possibilities are only limited by your gardening style, level of maintenance and imagination.

A favorite of mine is using pressure treated one by fours on edge with relief cuts on the back to allow for bending. These one by fours are secured to small wooden stakes placed every 4 to 6 feet. This keeps a clean edge, weathers nicely and holds up after constant weed-eating.

For those of you that would like to try something different, let me share what my friends Hank and Cheryl Rye did. They bordered their front perennial garden with charming blue bottles and in so doing created an area that is rich with color and whimsy. Here's how.....

Materials:

- glass bottles
- bag of play sand
- shovel
- can of spray paint

Method

1. Choose your bottles. You can use anything from mason jars to wine bottles. Garage sales, thrift stores and flea markets are wonderful places to start looking for such items if you have nothing on hand already. Design tip-If you are bordering an evergreen planting, the bottles can be all different colors. If you are lining a flower garden, use bottles all the same color. You don't want the color of the bottles to compete with the color of the flowers. After you have collected your bottle of choice, if they are dingy, rinse them with any glass cleaning solution and air dry.
2. Decide where you want your bottles to be placed. This line is easily marked with spray paint. Keeping the bottles at least two inches from the grass edge will make hand weeding along the bottles easier. Don't use an electric or gas powered weed-eater near the bottles for obvious reasons. You can maintain a crisp edge with hand-weeding.
3. Using your shovel, dig a trench along the painted line. The depth of the trench depends on the height of your bottles. You want to be able to sink 50% of the bottle in the ground.
4. Pour a thin layer of sand in the trench.
5. Place the bottle up-side-down in the trench and fill in with soil. Your bottles can be flush with each other or you can stagger their heights. Either way, just make sure the soil is packed well and the bottles are stable. So, if you like the bottle idea great, remember it works best when edging a bed against grass, or a gravel path. Be careful if the border touches a paved surface

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like a driveway or walkway as car or wheelbarrow could do some damage. Whatever option you choose, don't forget to measure for the length of material you will need, have some fun, try to beat the heat, and enjoy your yard. Happy gardening, Amanda & Bill

For more information about gardening in our area, visit the University of Florida IFAS Leon County Extension website at <http://leon.ifas.ufl.edu>.

*William Kollar & Amanda Pace are Landscape Designers with Gardens, Inc. and members of the University of Florida IFAS Leon County Extension Advisory Committee.