



It's a Plant!



See this tangelo? It's half orange (mandarin orange) and half grapefruit. The best part is, it's seedless. But, if tangelos don't have seeds, how do farmers grow new tangelo trees?



Here are a few seedless ways to grow plants:

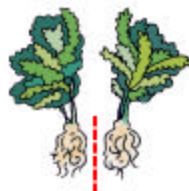
Split a plant in half.
Plant the two halves.

or

Cut off and
plant a plantlet.

or

Cut off a stem and
let it grow roots.



So this skimpy stem can grow into a lush new plant? Don't believe it until you try it yourself!

Let's grow!

Here's all you need

- geraniums, spider plants, ivy, african violets, or other plants*
- scissors
- cups of water (one cup per clipping)

- plastic bags (optional)
- flower pots
- potting soil

* No plants at home? Ask your neighbor. This experiment will not hurt a healthy plant.

Here's what to do:

1. Water your plant.
2. Cut a stem at an angle just below a leaf. Make the cut 4 to 6 inches from the tip of the stem.



3. Pluck off leaves and buds at the bottom of the stem you just cut.
4. Set each clipping in water. A plastic bag keeps in moisture.
5. Set the cups in a light spot, but not where direct sun will hit them.
6. If roots grow in a few weeks or so, plant the cutting. If not, that's okay. You will want to know which plants don't work, too.



Here's more about plants:

Cutting makes a clone -- an exact copy of the parent plant. An orchard full of clones has strong plants that produce a lot of fruit. But these identical trees also have identical weaknesses. One disease could wipe out the whole orchard.

To create a new kind of plant, farmers sometimes graft (combine) two different plants so that they grow together as one. This new plant has traits of both parents. It may get disease-fighting traits from one parent plant and extra-fruit making traits from another, for example.

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