

Re-Using Plastic Bottles for Safety's Sake

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This is definitely not my idea, and it may not be new to some of you. However, it is certainly something that is well worth sharing since it may help you avoid some potentially serious injuries. It also has a relationship to food in general because it involves using otherwise discarded containers.

A few years ago, while visiting a friend's home in the Toronto area. I noticed that they had put inverted plastic water bottles on all the stakes around their tomato plants and elsewhere in their garden. This piqued my curiosity, so not being backward about being forward, I asked them what purpose all the water bottles were serving. The reason was very simple, and rather clever. Someone in their extended family had been weeding her garden, and when she bent over, she struck her face on the end of a wooden stake supporting one of the plants. This not only cut the woman's face, but unfortunately did some damage to her eye.

By placing an empty plastic bottle over the exposed end of each stake, the risk of injury was significantly reduced. Not only do the bottles create a blunt end to the stakes, but they also make them more visible.

I've used this idea as a safeguard on several metal pipes that we've put in the ground to support some Christmas spotlights. Once the spotlights have been removed, it is often not possible to pull the pipes from the frozen ground until the spring thaw arrives. By placing bottles over the ends of these pipes, things are just a little bit safer than they would otherwise be with the ends of the pipes exposed.

Several of our indoor plants also have stakes around them to provide support. When bending over to water them, it is quite possible to stab your face. A few small plastic bottles have now found a new home on these stakes and should hopefully help prevent anything untoward from occurring.

We personally use bottled water quite infrequently, opting instead for more environmentally friendly re-usable water bottles and travel mugs. However, if you are into gardening and have some water bottles or small plastic soft-drink bottles that are headed for the recycle bin, you might want to put them to good use before sending them on that final trip at the end of the gardening season.



Placing plastic soft-drink or water bottles over the ends of stakes in your garden can help prevent serious eye or other injuries.