

Gardening - Is This Your Favorite Past Time?

Gardening is a pastime activity and also the art and craft of growing plants, with a goal of creating a beautiful environment. Gardening most often takes place inside one's residence.

Choosing the place: Choose a place closer to your home. For flower gardens, choose a place close to the door or with a good view from a favorite window where you'll see and enjoy it often. This will also motivate you to garden more.

Testing The Soil: Check the pH of soil. This will tell you how acidic or alkaline your soil is. Plants cannot absorb nutrients unless the soil's pH is within an acceptable range. Most plants can be grown on a neutral pH of 6.2 - 6.8. Then test the soil texture i.e. whether it is sandy, heavy clay, rocky or sandy loam. Whatever the texture, it can be improved by adding organic matter such as compost. Also test for the nutrients and minerals in it.

Preparing the Bed: Your chosen site will have grass on it or at least weeds, which must be cleared before planting anything. Use a flat-edged sharp spade to slice out the sod or just plainly pull out with hands; even tilling without removing the grass or weeds can suffice and let them decompose.

What to Grow: You have to restrict yourself to a handful of plants. If you are growing vegetables start with what you like to consume, not available locally and also give a longer harvest, like tomatoes, lettuce and beans unlike corn which takes a lot of space and requires a long time. For flower gardens start with what colors you like. Learn a tip or two from your neighbors who are growing successfully. Make sure all the plants have the same growing requirements- light, water and pH. Keep the variety of plants limited as it makes a better composition to have more plants of fewer varieties.

Planting: Water the plants in their pots a day ahead of planting them. Don't remove all of them from their pots and expose the roots to dry out in the sun. If the roots are closely packed or growing in a circle, tease them apart and stretch it out. Bury the plant to the depth it was in the pot. Too deep and the stem will rot; too high and the roots will dry out. Don't press down hard on the plants as you cover them. Watering will settle them into the ground. Immediately water your newly planted garden as soon as it is planted and make sure it gets at least one inch of water per week.

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