

Successful Gardening

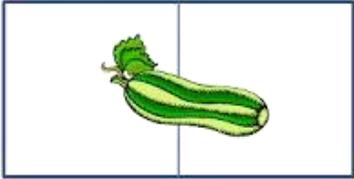
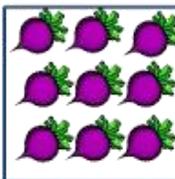
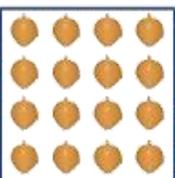
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- Size matters, consider the time you have to dedicate to gardening. It helps determine how large of a garden to have.
- Sketch the outline of your garden, this will help as plants emerge and for crop rotation.

Container Gardening

- There are a wide variety of containers available to gardeners that are affordable. Plastic containers offer drainage holes and are light-weight. Clay pots are heavier, but porous.
- You can be nifty and upcycle a container. I caution people to be aware of the container you are upcycling, such as a container that had chemicals in it. KEY IS DRAINAGE on upcycling a container. If the container doesn't have drainage, make sure you can make drainage holes in it.
- Best soil option for a container garden is to purchase something commercially as it is sterile, meaning it is disease and weed free whereas garden soil is heavy and can be compacted in a container. If you are doing a raised-bed directly on the ground you may consider garden soil.
- Container gardens require more water than a traditional ground garden. Check containers daily if they are outside. Simply stick your finger about an inch deep and if the soil is dry, then water.
- Utilize a water-soluble fertilizer at half the rate and then adjust as needed.
- Square foot gardening is a great option for raised beds. You can maximize the space, set-up is simple, it's less labor intensive, less and easier weeding, no tilling, and crop rotation is achieved by simply moving into a new square.

XL 1 plant per 2 square feet	L 1 plant	M 4 plants	S 9 plants	XS 16 plants
Watermelon 	Tomato 	Lettuce 	Bush bean 	Radish 
Zucchini squash 	Eggplant 	Basil 	Beet 	Carrot 
Pumpkin 	Broccoli 	Marigold 	Spinach 	Onions 
Melon Winter squash Summer squash	Cabbage Cauliflower Cucumber Okra Pepper	Corn Parsley Potato Strawberry Turnip		

Traditional Garden

- General rule of thumb plants require 1 inch of water/week. It is best achieved through one or two deep, thorough watering/week. Avoid overhead watering, especially with a sprinkler as this can spread disease. Water at the base of the plant. Soaker hoses are a great option, but can be messy.
- Keep weeds down and attack them as they appear. Cultivation is the best method. Chemical is not recommended for a garden.
- Mulch (organic) can be a defensive measure for weeds and conserve moisture.
- Garden tools are helpful in the garden: gloves, hoe, spade, trowel, ergonomic tools.
- Think Vertical! Getting plants off the ground will allow more air flow, sunlight, and reduces humidity around the plants lessening the chances of disease.

- Grow recommended varieties and buy from reliable sources. Don't use seed that is over a year old. Look for healthy transplants, not pale, small plants. If you do have leftover seed store it in an airtight container in a cool, dry place. A refrigerator works well.
- Attract pollinators by planting flowering plants throughout the whole growing season.
 - a. Spring: crocus, wild columbine, chives
 - b. Mid-Summer: bee balm, black-eyed susan, coneflower
 - c. Fall: New England aster, sedum, stiff goldenrod

Pest Control

- Select disease resistant varieties, thin out properly, keep weeds down, stay out of the garden when plants are wet, rotate crops, use safe pesticides and follow the label accordingly.
- There are many natural enemies, make sure to consider them into account prior to using chemicals.
- We also have other animals that pose a problem in our prairie state.
 - Plants that deter rabbits: daffodils, sedum, foxglove, iris, yarrow, and lambs-ear.
 - Plants that deter deer: black-eyed susan, daffodils, lavender, coneflowers, larkspur, and hawthorn.
- Scare tactics...very temporary.
- Repellents
 - Contact repellents- directly applied to the plants and make them taste bad.
 - Area repellents- placed in a problem area and repels by a foul odor.
- Fencing- most effective defensive, but is also the most expensive.
 - Deer- need 8 ft tall and woven wire is better. You can also use electric fence, but will need several strands.
 - Rabbits- chicken wire is recommended with the mesh being 1 inch or less. You will want it 24 inches tall for cottontails and 36 inches for jackrabbits. Bury the fence 6 inches deep.
- Harvest at peak quality and store properly. Some veggies can be harvested before peak if there is a threat of frost. Pumpkins and tomatoes will ripen off the vine as long as there is a blush of color on them.