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About the Author

Max Gossage loves his garden.

He knows many people who gave up trying to fit their gardening into their busy lifestyle. Max is sure that his ebook can help them and you enjoy gardening more and get better results with less effort, money and time.

Max said, “People say they don’t have the energy, time or commitment to keep their garden in shape. They miss out on so many benefits because of their busy lifestyle or other concerns.”

He shares his experience along with proven ideas from many other gardeners to help you and your family get the results you have always dreamed of.

The “Really Easy Garden Guide” has ways to grow better flowers, fruit, vegetables and other plants.

“I’ve included suggestions to help deal with all the common problems which get in the way of us having the success and enjoyment from a garden which we deserve.”

“Everyone who has the desire to be a better gardener will find this book a great help.”

“Almost everyone can have some sort of garden, whatever their current situation. Even the simplest can make their life more enjoyable and no-one can say how far they might go from that small beginning.”

“My book is focused on helping you to enjoy the benefits of your own productive, low-cost and minimum-effort garden.”

Introduction

**You don't need a green thumb to be a successful gardener,
You just need to get your thumbs dirty sometimes.**

This book will help you to start a garden or improve the one you already have.

There are suggestions to remove the concerns you may have about the amount of time, effort and money you need to maintain a great garden.

This is not just a book of quick tips. I kept everything simple but tried to include all the information you need without any special terms or over-long explanations.

Your time is precious but few gardeners ever regret the time they invest in their plants. It's more productive than watching television and proven to have real benefits for our health and outlook.

Gardening is a great activity for family members to enjoy together. Even young children can become keen, especially if you give them a few plants of their own. The first time they eat a strawberry or pick a flower they grew themselves, they'll be hooked!

Gardening is also a very sociable activity. Gardeners all around the world like to share our ideas and help each other. It's a great way to meet new, enthusiastic and friendly people while you share and improve your own skills of gardening.

Please read the book right through first. Make notes about those areas which are most relevant to your current needs and situation, then re-read those sections to get all the details clear in your mind.

I've kept everything simple because that's what I look for when I need help.

I wish you many happy, healthy and fruitful years of gardening!

Max Gossage

Planning Prevents Problems

All gardeners know that scheduled work in their garden can sometimes take priority over social and other commitments.

If you are going to have a regular outside garden, get the information about the plants you want to have and draw up a rough plan of the area you have for the garden.

You might choose to set out:

- ✿ A fairly traditional plan with plots separated by narrow pathways
- ✿ A garden where every section is divided into smaller sections with a different type of plant in each
- ✿ A garden with a mix of flowers and vegetables, or
- ✿ A container garden.

Will you use raised beds? They will greatly reduce the need for you to bend and lift after they are set up.

I'll give you more detail of each of these options later in this ebook. You will have to decide which fits your situation and gardening goals.

This is a great project for late winter, sitting inside with hot drinks and discussing with your partner what you will do when the days are warmer in your garden.

Check which plants are likely to be most successful in your area and when the plants or seed will be available. Some plants may need to be ordered to ensure you can get the varieties and number you want.

Start your garden with a plan that is well within your ability. You can expect some challenges because so many things are outside our control. Having some reserves will go some way to ensure that first project is successful. That will get you better prepared to tackle more in the future.

I'll point out more benefits of each option in the sections about them.

Too Many Plants: Many enthusiastic new gardeners do is plant too many plants. Even if you love, say, broad beans - a few plants will be enough for most families.

Get input from all the family: Discuss the garden in detail with your partner and find out whether they and other members of your family are really interested in taking on some of the work apart from eating the best of the produce.

Select your plants to suit yourselves, but listen to advice from local gardeners about what will actually flourish in your area.

Ask the locals: Ask some local experienced gardeners for advice. That’s a good way to build relationships with more people in your neighborhood.

You can also help the relationships by occasionally lending your tools or your labor. Be careful with both.

I try to be available for local charity working bees. You don’t see any lazy people here.

They are usually great places to meet people you might not mind sharing a few afternoons, or even a tool or two with.

Get Your Garden Growing!

Whatever is stopping you having a garden can probably be overcome.



Many people often put off starting one or improving the one which they already have because it's too expensive, too labor intensive or their previous garden was a disaster.

But, we would love to get the benefits of growing and eating our own vegetables and herbs, or gathering our own flowers to add brightness and sweet smells to our home.

I've filled this book with proven ways which I and people like you have used to achieve these goals.

You can have a garden without busting your budget or your back and it can be done in whatever time you can spare.

You can set your own goals. Start with something small which you feel really interested in. A small but significant success can be the best motivator to your future efforts.

If you need more time than other people to get something done, I know from my own experience that the success will taste even sweeter when it arrives.

Good tools ensure better results

You don't need a lot of equipment to maintain a good garden. The real secret is to **get only quality tools**. Although you can save money when you buy dime-store brands, they will cost you more in the long-run:

- They break and you can get hurt when they do.
- You won't get good results, however well you try to use them.
- You will be replacing them more often but they don't improve.

- You can damage your plants with them.
- Each task will take longer.

Power Tools

Some people seem to buy every new power tool for their garden as soon as it is released.

I think they're great when you have a need for its benefits which is great enough to justify the initial cost and maintenance.

Do you need a power cultivator or would a change to raised beds and some mixed plants reduce the workload enough that you could handle the garden more comfortably?

Then, you might put that money to some other use which your whole family could enjoy.

You Need to Keep Learning

I am old enough to remember when almost every garden you saw was prepared and maintained in much the same way.

Sections were large and every square inch of soil was turned over every season. Every gardener was proud of their efforts to feed their family with their own crops and accepted the exhausting effort was essential for good results.



Today, there are ways to get great results with less effort, time and expense. You can use better tools, power equipment and improved methods to produce great results even when you have limited money, time and space. It's important to keep in touch with new developments.

The Internet

The Internet is an almost unlimited resource. There are many good, credible sites like those listed in the resources section of this book.

*But, remember that sites may change ownership and content without notice, or be hacked by evil-doers. Always use up-to-date security software on your computer. Don't take chances.

The Government IS there to Help You

Your various government agencies at all levels also provide valuable services and information, often at low or no cost.

As well as the national departments, you can get help and advice from state and local bodies as well as agricultural services and related schools and colleges.

Get Local Expertise



You can get hard-won expertise delivered free and with a smile. Experienced gardeners will gladly share their recommendations and sometimes give you some samples too!

If they do, be sure to thank them by offering some choice pieces of your output when they are available.

But, keep in mind that many gardeners have favorite plants and procedures and may suggest forcefully that they are superior when your choice could really have been equally successful.

Another way you can give back to gardeners who help you is to share any excess seeds or plants which you have an excess of. Some packets might have hundreds of seeds more than you could possibly use in a couple of years.

Clubs and Associations

If you have the time, joining a gardening club, especially one related to your particular interests, can be very helpful. If you are very busy, you may consider joining a State or National group which provides information and services that you can use.

It's easy enough to arrange a visit to a local club so you can check it out.

If you don't know any members, ask your local garden or hardware store for contact details.

Invest in Raised Beds to Save Work

Raised beds are a very popular method of setting up or re-establishing a garden. They would help this lady eliminate bending and stretching!



They are very good for people with limited physical strength or mobility.

Getting them up requires some cost and concentrated physical labor which could be worthwhile to pay someone to do if you cannot handle

that yourself.

Once the beds are in place with the prepared soil, the rest of the work is much easier.

The idea behind this method is that raising the beds makes the plants more accessible to people with physical problems. They can make the space between the beds whatever width they need. Set the height of the beds level with your hips and make the width of each bed narrow enough that they can rake the soil or handle the plants without bending or stretching.

The beds can be started almost anywhere.

The position for each bed is marked out and the frames are constructed.

The idea is extremely adaptable. Use what is available and affordable. You can make the beds permanent or removable if you may want to use the area in another way later on.

Some use rot-resistant woods like cedar and pine. They put four corner posts in, then screw vertical boards to them, forming the sides. The sides and uprights should be the same height.

The sides might also be made from second-hand materials like metal sheet, logs, bricks or other suitable items which won't affect the soil or plants within.

Narrow raised beds can be set up where there is no room for wider ones.

Enriched soil is put in the beds. Use quality growing soil for at least the top six inches or so. The rest should be of at least reasonable quality so that it doesn't compact too much.

Compost and vermiculite should be added to the top layer, if costs allow, so that it retains moisture and there is nourishment for the plants you will grow.

A drip system is the best way to keep the beds watered but you can do it with a hose if it can reach all the beds without any problems.

These beds can be used by anyone, even children.

Recycle your old Hose

If you have a hose which is worn, you can block one end of it by folding it over and fitting a permanent clamp to flatten that end.

Then, just punch a few holes along it and fix it in place for use as a free soaking hose. It won't last forever but it will do for a while.

Boxed Gardens – Abundance from Small Areas

This is a breakthrough developed several years ago which builds on the raised beds method in the previous chapter to provide higher production and an easy way to grow more types of plants in the same area.

There are some changes to the set-up which are worth the extra effort because of the improved results, according to some of the thousands of people who now use the system.

You, or someone you hire, should thoroughly dig the area where you will set up your frame. If you use a lawn area, use a spade to cut out sections about two inches thick and a foot square from where you will set your frame.

Turn the lawn squares over and pile them in another spot. Just soak them thoroughly and let them break down to a supply of quality garden soil.

If you are using an area of good soil, you can skip the next step.

If the area is not likely to be productive, lay a few inches of good mulching material (hay and other clippings). Newspapers or carpet can be used when you don't have good mulch materials handy but it could take longer.

Give the area a bit of water but don't overdo it.

Keep it wet and avoid walking over the area.

Check the ground underneath. When it is softened, put the mulch aside and you can start preparing your garden.

If you cannot wait that long or the effort involved is too much work or too expensive to get done by someone else, you can just set up a frame like before with the wood frame, fill it with reasonable quality soil and at least six inches of quality compost on the top.

You should use internal divisions inside the frames to keep the plants in each square section apart. Otherwise, some might send roots into the next section and interfere with the other plants.

Set the plants in each section in four-inch squares. Put one large plant in its own four-inch section and maybe three very small ones of the same variety in each in four-inch section of another division. You can fit some extra plants

in some sections if you use plants which will grow alongside the section wall. Then, you set the plants on the inside of that plant just two inches away.

Put different plants in each section.

When you harvest the plants from one section, remove them completely. Add fresh compost and set the section up with a different kind of plant.

This will help with the plant’s nutrition and also reduce the possibility that insects or diseases which attack one particular type will build up in that section like they would if it continued to be used for the same type of plants.

You just need to put a couple of seeds in each hole. That will leave you more to keep and use next year or to share this year with neighbors or friends who are also gardeners.

* Note that some commercial seed companies are offering seeds which produce plants that do not produce seeds. You have to buy more each year if you want those particular varieties.

If you transplant something into a box, gently press down the soil near its stem so that a little water will collect there to help it get started.

Put your water in a bucket and let the sun warm it before you give your plants a drink.

Keep Pets out of Your Garden

My grandfather let his dog roam the garden but only after he'd trained it to keep off the garden beds.

I recommend that you train your dog or cat to stay off your garden beds and, especially, other people's for their own safety.

It's actually a better idea to keep them away from your garden altogether. There are many plants which can harm your pets.

The list at <http://www.aspca.org> lists over 400 which may be dangerous to some degree. They note that “the list is not meant to be all-inclusive”! They have a printable list and other information on that site.

But, prevention is far better than trying to identify the plant and get a vet, even if there is still time.

There are other things which can put your pets at risk. Cocoa mulch, a waste product from chocolate production should not be used where pets are allowed, especially dogs. Mulch and compost contain decomposing vegetable and other matter. The smells (and there are always some) will attract your pets and that can be disastrous for them.

Tools and other garden accessories like stakes, twine, fences and even many ornaments can cause injury to pets. They may even lick chemical or paint residue off those items.

Sprays and other chemical solutions are dangerous in themselves in their containers when used. Their residues in the soil or on the ground as well as plants and trees can remain dangerous for years.

Apart from possible harm to the pet, there is no doubt that a loose animal can cause damage to your garden.

Train them if you can but the best way is to lock them out and make sure that someone is closely watching them if they ever get near your garden or your shed.

Container Gardens are Great!



Container gardening may seem to have limits simply because everything is confined to a container of some sort.

But, with a little thought and effort, you can achieve some great results with containers.

There are some very important things to remember when you use containers.

Make sure your container is safe for the plant you put in it and the people who will eat the produce from it.

Good drainage is vital. You need to provide enough holes of sufficient size so that they won't become clogged by the plant's roots or by the soil starting to be compacted if you forget to check it.

Sunlight is essential but we may not realize they won't get enough in a particular spot. You may think your plants are getting all they need until they start to die!

Add fertilizer as required to make up for what your plants draw from the soil.

Put plants with similar needs and which are known to get along together in the same pot and set it where they will all be happy.

Tag your containers. You want to write what you planted and when at a minimum.

Aside from their production potential, containers are great for planting just one or two of a different kind of plant to what you usually grow as an experiment.

Tomatoes are a good choice for containers. Use a reasonably large container.

Don't try to grow the very large varieties in pots unless you find one that is specially bred to clump so that it will tend to stay inside the perimeter of the pot.

You can grow almost any vegetable in containers which have sufficient size and strength. Avoid extra large or tall plants for safety reasons.

I've mentioned only vegetables so far in this section. But, containers are just as useful for providing a home for many of your favorite flowering plants.

Be creative with your choice of containers, make sure that they are stable on the surface where you set them.

If you want more plants, you can hang plants in containers from the top of your porch.

Just make sure that it is very securely fastened so that it can take the extra weight when the fruit or vegetables start to appear on that plant!

Starting Your Own Seeds

I use seedlings most of the time because, while seeds are much cheaper, the sprout has to go through transplanting before it starts its main growing period.

Of course, you can start your seeds in toilet roll cores or egg carton sections but that is more time and fuss – I prefer to get the seedlings from a supplier who is known to be reliable and let them do that part.

If you start your own seeds, you have to check them closely at least every day. If you are travelling, get someone reliable to check twice a day – that way there is a good chance they will check at least once a day!

Too much or too little water will mean you have to buy seedlings.

Don't plant out your home-started plants until there's no chance of frost. Because of the care you lavished on them, any hint of a chill will probably be too much for them.

Of course, you can give them better protection in a container or under a temporary plastic cover if you put them outside.

The Family that Gardens Together



The truth is that not all members of a family are likely to be much interested in gardening or any of the other pastimes or passions which some other members favor. You can try to encourage your kids and spouse to share your garden. If they do, you all will

have another shared interest which will help you stay healthier and probably happier.

I think we should try to get our kids interested but do it fairly low-key.

Herbs can be a good way to attract their interest. They have color and scent. You might give your child some pictures of what the mature herb will look like. Let them pick a couple to try to grow and give them some pots and small tools.

Always emphasize hygiene. Get them to wash their hands and dry them after



any gardening. You can suggest they rub a little mind soap along the end of their fingernails before they start. It will keep dirt from getting under their nails and can be quickly washed away when they clean up after the session.

Give them an extra pot and a few extra seeds or seedlings because it's likely that not all will thrive.

You could let them use some

other items instead of the pots or they could decorate their pots. You will need drainage holes in whatever the plants are grown in, of course.

Carrots are popular with most children (unless they're cooked). You can let them grow some. It's a lesson in patience because they will probably want to lift the plants when the tops change color.

Some bigger seeds like cucumber, sunflowers and pumpkin are easy for children to plant themselves.

All this, is in addition to the old idea of starting seeds on cotton wool. I think producing stuff they can eat and will probably enjoy is the better way to get them started on their own gardening adventure.

New Vegetables from Old!

I do a bit of recycling when I see a way to do it without much fuss.

I like to recycle vegetables.

Actually, I recycle some parts which we don't to get new vegetables. Our kitchen scraps mostly feed the worm farm but I like to put a few potato pieces back in the ground.

Sweet potatoes need a bit more preparation and take longer to produce, but work well. You need a strong glass jar, wide enough that you could slip the sweet potato inside with a little to spare all round. Also, get a few toothpicks.

Cut a whole sweet potato in halves.

Push three or four into the sides of one half of the sweet potato about half-way down.

Rest the sweet potato on its toothpicks in the top of the jar with the cut surface of the potato downward.

Keep the jar and potato in a sunny position and water it daily.

In maybe three weeks you will have a few healthy shoots well-started from the top of your potato.

Keep watering the original potato until each shoot is almost six inches long.

Twist the shoots off and lay them (leaf end up) in a small bowl of water. They will grow roots fairly soon

In a few days, you can plant them in your garden. You'll need some space for the vines. If space is limited, set up a frame or large bag with quality soil and plant your free plants in that!..

I'll sprout carrot tops in a dish of water just like we learned to do in school long ago.

I will plant garlic and onions directly in the soil. The worms don't like onions, so that's a plus.

If you try this, you will probably find that some work better than others for you.

But, it’s certainly worth the minimum time and effort.

Celery works really well for my cousin. Her family like celery and they carefully cut away the base from each celery they get to produce a new plant.

They put it, with the stalk pointing up, in a small bowl with some warm water.

Then, they dig a small hole just a bit deeper than the height of the celery base. Fill it with water almost to the top. Put the celery base in with the stalk pointing up like it was in the bowl.

Add some soil to discourage anything digging in and eating the small celery shoots.

In just a few days, you should see shoots break the surface.

When you harvest the celery, just cut off the base and do it all again!

You can use tomato seeds which you get from those you buy. Your results will vary – don’t be disappointed if some fail. Don’t plant seeds from hybrid varieties as most are not intended to produce new plants.

Dry the seeds before planting them.

Growing Herbs for Health and Happiness



I think herbs are great and most will reward your efforts with a good crop.

You can grow them in your garden, if the soil is in good condition and there is plenty of sun.

But, it's probably easier to grow each of your favorite cooking herbs in its own pot.

That will give you greater control of the conditions for that plant.

As with other plants in containers, quality of growing medium and sufficient drainage is very important.

Make sure the drain holes are big enough that the drainage won't be blocked.

If you expect to use a lot of a particular herb, use a larger pot.

To make it lighter in case you want to move it sometimes, put a layer of non-degradable foam beads in the bottom of the pot.

Herbs need sun for their health, just like we do. If you keep your plants inside, you may need to move them to sunnier positions on cloudy days.

Herbs are not often bothered by pests but can become susceptible if they are kept in conditions which weaken them.

Wonderful Worms!



I suggest you start your own worm farm to clean up some kitchen scraps and get your own source of the magical “worm tea” which is a great fertilizer you get in return from the worms.

Oh, they also give you worm castings which are also very useful in the garden.

If you set up your worm farm with a little care and keep it clean and sealed, you should not have any problems like smell or vermin. Their presence indicates a problem with your farm. You should consult someone in your area who has experience with worm farms so you can fix the problem quickly. You might want to dust the cover with a little lime as a first step.

A commercial worm farm can be fairly inexpensive but most home-built farms work well too and you can save money by investing a bit of time and re-using some clean plastic containers, polystyrene containers used for transporting vegetables or even wood as long as it has not been treated with chemicals. They could leach into the farm and cause big problems.

Get a plastic tap for a brewery kit supplier and fix it into the side of the bottom container about one inch above the base. You’ll use that to pour out your liquid “gold”, worm tea.

You need to prepare a bed in the bottom container for your worms. Use shredded blank newsprint if you can get it cheaply. If not, shredded newspapers will do – I don’t like introducing the ink into the worms’ diet.

Good soil and some shredded leaves should also be included to round out the worms’ diet. The bedding should measure about two inches in thickness.

Mix it together and wet it. It should always be wet but don’t let it get soggy.

Buy your worms (one thousand should be enough because they will multiply if you keep the conditions right) from commercial suppliers, fishing supply

stores or plant nurseries. Most popular types are Tiger, Indian Blues and Red Wigglers.

Start them off with a small amount of food. That could be some banana, cut banana peel, other fruit or vegetable peel, tea leaves, crushed eggshell, shredded paper or egg cartons and similar soft cardboard.

Chop or shred everything to make it easy for the worms to digest it as quickly as possible.

Don't add much food at a time or before they have consumed almost every part of their last meal. Otherwise you will start to accumulate rotting material and the whole set-up could become bad.

Make sure they do not get even small amounts of dairy, meat, fish, citrus, fat, garlic, or onion.

Get the worm tea out through the tap you fixed to the side of the bottom container. Dilute it about ten parts water to one part tea before use.

Open the container and push the used bedding to one side. Put some fresh bedding in the other side.

In a few days, remove the old bedding for use in your garden. Almost all the worms will be settled in the new bedding by then.

Any you transfer to your garden with the old bedding should do fine there.

Your garden and your pot plants will thrive with the tea and the castings, one of the best and cheapest additives for soil.

Keep Birds off Your Garden

You probably know that birds can be a nuisance for gardeners and a profit-stealing pest to farmers and others involved in agriculture and horticulture.

Lately, there has been a higher level of concern developing over some of the diseases and other pests birds may pass on to humans and various animals.

Lethal force is only effective against individual birds and the remains can still present a potential risk.

Also, many places have tight legal restrictions about what birds may be killed and the methods which are allowed to be used.

There are many non-lethal methods which are used in various places.

Each one has its supporters but anyone that wants to try any of them should check with their local authorities first or they may get more trouble than a few birds.

Sound effects have been used, from recordings of birds in danger to cannon fire without any ammunition involved.

It works for some kinds of birds for a while. The user needs to change the effects and the sound levels to have any hope of continued relief. You may get some hassle from neighbors and the local authorities if your sounds are too loud for them and the problem is not regarded as serious.

Visual devices range from the traditional scarecrow to imitation predators like owls and snakes. Many don't move and may become ineffective fairly quickly.

Some people set up kites which have birds, such as hawks or owls on them. They can have some effect as they flutter and soar in the wind.

There is an iridescent anti-bird foil. You cut off strips and fix them where they will float and twist in any wind. The constantly changing pattern and odd movement can be effective.

Some chemicals which taste bitter have been used. Check with your local agricultural service because the regulations about these sort of preparations are under review from time to time.

Keep Animals Out

The animals which are likely to invade your garden vary from state to state and between countries.

Rats, mice and other rodents are found everywhere. The best way to keep them out is to have strong fences, strong wire netting which they can't chew or bite through and with holes too small for them to squeeze through and to remove anything which might attract them.

Only use baits in enclosed areas. Rodents will carry bait into other areas where it could harm children or pets or contaminate crops.

Rabbits are also common. They cause a lot of damage and some people continue to lose their crops because they don't realize how small a hole they can actually squeeze through. Think of a size and halve it is a good rule of thumb.

Raised beds will also reduce the effects of these pests. Of course, hares can jump, so they might still cause some problems but they aren't usually around in the same numbers as rabbits.

Strong fences make good neighbors and reduce problems from four-legged as well as two-legged thieves.

For the bigger animals such as deer, your fence may need to be about eight feet high. Unless they are a big problem, you might think that's a bit expensive. But, it would not be if your livelihood was affected.

For burrowing animals, you need to dig the holes for your fence below ground level about eighteen inches and bend the bottom of the mesh outward, away from your property.

If it is straight down, they will dig beneath the bottom edge.

You may need similar mesh around any enclosures where you keep chickens and other stock.

Should You Test Your Soil?

I’m referring to doing or getting someone to do a proper pH test on your garden.

You can do a number of less accurate checks which will give you some indications but I believe that anyone who is investing significant money or other resources in their garden or expecting to get income from it really needs to get the information available at fairly low cost from a proper pH test.

It’s your decision but here is why I suggest it if those points apply to you.

A real pH test will take more time and you probably won’t get the results right away. You’ll have to collect several samples from your garden, following the instructions from the company or Agricultural Service which you pay to do the actual test.

The more carefully you follow those instructions, the more useful the final report from them is likely to be.

Your pH test will indicate how acidic the various areas of your garden, where you collect the samples from, are.

If you want great tomatoes, it helps to have the soil they’re in at a pH between 5 and 7.

Some other plants might be okay in part of that range but not tolerate either the lower or upper part of it.

The plants which are in soils that have a pH they don’t appreciate could give smaller crops and need longer to produce, have less natural defenses against some diseases and other problems and also be unable to make full use of the nutrients which are provided to them.

If you are depending on getting good prices for your produce, especially in today’s tough market, you don’t want underperforming plants which take longer to mature. That costs you more fertilizer and effort for less return (if you get any).

If you are just using the garden to supply your own family and perhaps a few friends, you may still find it worthwhile to have a test done.

After all, you:

- ✿ Want to get the best return for everything you put into your garden
- ✿ Want to impress family and friends with your gardening success
- ✿ Provide everyone with the best produce you can
- ✿ Do it all in the least time possible.

Resting Your Garden

This was a standard practice when most gardens were planted in long rows. A garden usually had four plots with paths between them. There were usually three sections in use in each year and one being rested and refreshed.

It's still a good idea. You can even do it if you have a fairly smaller garden. Use the box system described in another Chapter and you can keep more of your actual garden area in production at any time.

Let some sections rest for a season and then, after clearing all plant material out of them, put something new there. Some people will put a layer of mulch over it if there is likely to be a lot of sunlight which could dry out the section they are resting.

I am sure that you will get a good crop the following season, unless conditions turn really bad, because that plot will be re-born, like a phoenix and full of vigor.

No Rest for the Gardener

Although your garden may need less doing for it during the winter, depending how you are using it, there are always plenty of things to keep you busy.

Paperwork: Gardeners have lots of forms and charts to fill out so that they know how their garden and its produce is progressing.

Sounds boring? Well, I don't think it is. It can be a real buzz when you see that your new plant selections are giving yields much above what you previously got.

If you don't bother to keep good records of what you plant, what is produced and what doesn't work for you, you will keep on getting the same poor results as before despite putting in all that extra effort. You might even give up your garden when all that was needed was to change the varieties which you planted or perhaps the fertilizer you used to produce really great results again.

Maintenance: Checking your tools, machinery and other bits and pieces is also important. You will need them in top order very soon. Some might need replacing or repair. No use waiting until you need it and the part you need might be out of stock. Using damaged equipment is one of the major causes of muscle pain. If the tool actually breaks when you use it, the injury could be much worse.

Planning: This is vital for continued improvement of the results you get. A plan should help you to fit your gardening activities better with your family events. Those dates are set most firmly of all as far as we are concerned.

Testing the Produce: The nicest part of the whole process is when you get to share your produce with family and friends.

Of course, that means you need to taste quite a bit beforehand so that you don't offer them anything which is not to your usual high standard. And, you need to dispose anything that isn't quite perfect as well.

More Tips to get You Growing More

Egg cartons are too flimsy to provide any valuable fiber when recycled. But, they are great to use for seed sprouting trays or very young kids’ toys.

I also use cardboard toilet rolls to protect seeds when I plant them directly into the garden or the large pot I plan to leave them in. Someone showed me a very miserly idea – he cut the rolls into four sections and planted four seeds with the pieces of one roll.

Pumpkins, squash zucchini and gourds work best when planted directly into the soil.

You should take more care when you transplant seedlings. The best way to plant delicate seeds which I ever used were thick peat pellets covered with plastic net.

You put the seed in, added water to the pellet and put it in the soil after the pellet expanded to be about the size of a small plant pot.

The net and the pellet broke down in the soil. Before then, the seed got some nutrient which had been put in the peat and was protected from almost anything which might try to get at it. If you see these peat pellets around, I suggest you try them.

Why Gardening is GOOD for YOU

We are constantly hearing that gardening is good for you.



But, some people find it hard work, boring or requiring too much time and expense.

The reason? They’re doing it wrongly!

You can do your garden at your own pace. Leave your stopwatch in your other jacket and relax a bit.

If you are unfit, you can set your own goals and fit in with whatever limits your doctor recommends. You will still start to improve!

If you can dig and mow your lawn, you may get as much benefit as someone cycling a couple of miles. And you don’t need a \$299 bicycle or any Lycra gear at all!

Carrying and lifting large pots or baskets of fruit will help to exercise your heart and also help your blood flow well.

Eating and sharing the fruit will help you a lot too.

If you think I’m overstating the potential benefits, it’s not just my view – I got the background information from the MacMillan Cancer Support and the National Garden Scheme in the United Kingdom:

<http://www.ngs.org.uk/news-features/features/macmillan-move-more-gardening-hints-and-tips.aspx>

But, the best proof is to try it yourself.

I hope my book will help you to have a wonderful time in your garden and in sharing what you grow for many years to come!

Max Gossage

Resources

I have included links to resources in various countries.

Many are part of international networks with branches or associated organizations which can help you if you live in a different country. Either contact the organizations or go to their websites to get further information.

We cannot accept any responsibility for anyone's use of these links

Gardeners' Organizations U.K.

Royal Horticultural Society

<http://www.rhs.org.uk/>

From their site: "The Royal Horticultural Society is the UK's leading gardening charity dedicated to advancing horticulture and promoting good gardening."

The Herb Society

<http://www.herbsociety.org.uk/>

From their site: "The Herb Society is an internationally-renowned educational charity which encourages the appreciation and use of herbs."

More U.K. links:

<http://www.gfgs.org.uk/gfgs/links.htm>

Gardeners' Organizations U.S.A.

Garden Club of America

<http://www2.gcamerica.org/index.cfm>

From their site: Founded in 1913 to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, the Garden Club of America is a national leader in the fields of horticulture, conservation, and civic improvement. It has about of 200 member clubs and approximately 18,000 members throughout the country"

National Garden Association

<http://www.garden.org/>

From their site: “A nonprofit leader in plant-based education, making available free educational plant-based materials, grants, and resources that speak to young minds, educators, youth and community organizations, and the general gardening public.

Kids’ Gardening

<http://www.kidsgardening.org/>

A section of the National Garden Association focused on children’s gardening activities.

National Garden Clubs

<http://www.gardenclub.org/>

From their site: “Our Mission: National Garden Clubs, Inc. provides education, resources and national networking opportunities for its members, to promote the love of gardening, floral design, civic, and environmental responsibility.

Garden Clubs Australia

The Garden Clubs of Australia Inc

<http://www.gardenclubs.org.au/minigen/>

The primary and major object of the Club is to extend the culture of gardening into the wider community for the benefit of all citizens

More links to Australian Gardening Clubs

<http://www.nurseriesonline.com.au/clubsandevents/Gardening-Clubs.html>

A list maintained by the Nurseries Online Directory

[Another eBookWholesaler Publication](#)