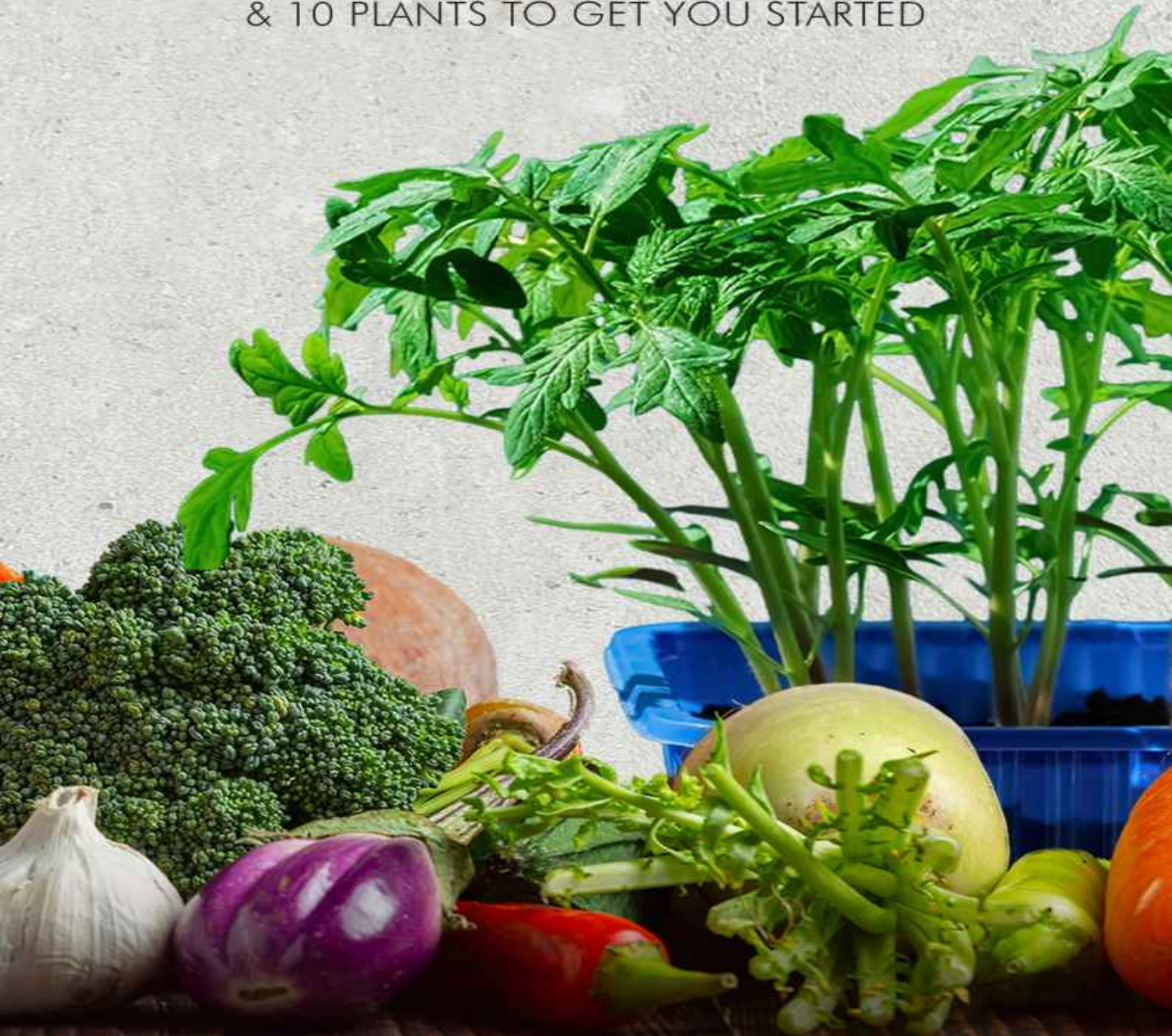


# Survival Gardening

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY  
& 10 PLANTS TO GET YOU STARTED



RENEGADE JONES

# **Survival Gardening**

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*A Beginners Guide to Self-Sufficiency  
10 Plants to Get You Started*

**Renegade Jones**

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# Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Chapter 1: First Things First—Why Should Anyone Learn Gardening?](#)

[Self-Sufficiency](#)

[Top Reasons to Start Your Own Garden](#)

[Chapter 2: Gardening Essentials for Beginners](#)

[What Beginners Need to Know](#)

[Taking Care of the Basics](#)

[Identifying Your Hardiness Zones](#)

[Chapter 3: Garden, Garden...Everywhere!](#)

[An Insight into Home Gardening](#)

[Basics of Gardening in Tiny Spaces](#)

[On to Survival Gardening](#)

[Chapter 4: Mapping Your Vegetation](#)

[Setting Up Your Garden](#)

[Deciding on Your Garden Size](#)

[Chapter 5: Getting Your Tools Ready](#)

[Seed Starting Containers](#)

[Seed Starting Mix](#)

[Tending Your Garden](#)

[Harvesting and Storing Your Produce](#)

[Chapter 6: The Different Styles of Gardening](#)

[Seeds or Saplings: What to Choose](#)

[Transplanting Garden Plants](#)

[Chapter 7: Setting the Base Right](#)

[Soil](#)

[Improving Soil Health](#)

[Potting Mix or Potting Soil?](#)

[Fertilizer](#)

## [Chapter 8: Nourishing Your Garden](#)

[Air](#)

[Water](#)

[Light](#)

## [Chapter 9: Populating Your Garden](#)

[Direct-Seeded in the Garden](#)

[Transplanted as Seedlings](#)

[Roots or Bulbs](#)

[Best 10 Vegetables for a Beginner Survival Garden](#)

## [Chapter 10: Storing Your Bounty](#)

[Storing Your Produce for Later Use](#)

[Food Preservation Methods](#)

## [Chapter 11: Protecting Your Plants](#)

[Survival and Protection](#)

[Protecting Plants from Cold and Frost](#)

[Protecting Plants in Summer](#)

[Protecting Plants from Soil-Borne Diseases](#)

[Protecting Plants from Animals](#)

[Protecting Plants from Human Error](#)

[Protecting Plants from Pests](#)

## [Chapter 12: The Gardener's Support](#)

[Finding a Gardening Mentor](#)

[Best Gardening Groups on Facebook](#)

[Best Online Courses on Gardening](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

[Image References](#)

[\*OceanofPDF.com\*](#)



## Introduction

Growing up in a city where food was readily available with nothing more than a call or a simple click, it can be hard to imagine having the need to grow your own food. This is how it was when I was growing up, and I know there are many others in similar situations. Why worry about growing your own food when restaurants are available on every street corner and grocery stores are filled with everything you need?

Being from a big city, I read a lot of comics and action books growing up—my favorite being *Indiana Jones*—and because of this, I always sought out adventure myself. One day, I decided to live it and planned a trip to South Africa. One evening while I was there, it was cold, and I was wandering around drenched, looking for something to eat. It was then that I ran into an American veteran who had been living in Vietnam for the past 11 years. Being from the same place, we ended up sparking up a conversation that went on for hours.

I learned a lot from this person, but the one thing that really stuck with me was the golden piece of advice that rang out in my head like a bell: Grow

your own food. Upon hearing this advice, I decided to really take it to heart and headed home with the vision to start my own garden. Over the years, I felt a solid sense to flourish in this skill and help others learn it as well. The events in 2020 solidified my belief that growing your own food is so important because sometimes food isn't always readily available when you expect it to be.

It is for these reasons that I wrote this book. With the soaring cost of food, having the ability to grow your own food is an invaluable skill. When you know how to grow your own food, you don't need to rely on other sources to get proper nutrition. Despite what some may believe, growing your own food doesn't need to be complicated. It can save you a lot of money, and it is incredibly rewarding once you can yield results.

Growing your own food is an accomplishment, and you should feel good about it. You know where all your food comes from when you grow it yourself, and you don't have to worry about what may or may not be in it. You feel accomplished when you can make the food you grew yourself, and though it takes a bit of work, the effort is always worth it. Growing your own food doesn't need to be something out of reach. Even if you don't have a lot of space, that doesn't mean growing your own food isn't in the cards.

If you've ever had the desire to grow your own food but never knew how to start, this is your chance to gain all the information you need to become self-sufficient and grow your own food. You will learn all about what plants are great beginner plants, what type of soil to use, and even how to gain support from others when honing your skills.

Gardening has been around forever and is an essential part of our survival. When you learn how to grow your own food, you are doing something you can be proud of. It is rewarding to be able to eat something out of your garden that you know you put the work into growing, and helping you achieve that feeling of satisfaction is why I wrote this book.





# **Chapter 1: First Things First—Why Should Anyone Learn Gardening?**

If you could just name one activity that allows you to grow your own food, helps you connect with nature, and enjoy every minute of the process, then gardening would be your best answer. While gardening may seem like a moot point for most people, as there is most likely food just a simple walk away at the local grocery store, there are plenty of reasons to think otherwise. If you want to know why growing your own food is the best way to go, then keep reading, and you will learn everything you need to know about how to start your own garden and why growing your own food may be the best thing after all.

## **Self-Sufficiency**

According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, self-sufficiency is when you are able to provide for yourself without any outside assistance (2022). It means you are capable of taking care of all your own needs and don't need help from others when it comes to getting what you need. Despite this definition, not everyone thinks about being self-sufficient similarly. Some believe that it simply means that you can maintain your home and buy your own food without help. However, for others, it may mean a lot more than that. For some, it may mean growing your own food and building your own home, sourcing your own water, and everything in between. No matter your reasoning, gardening is an excellent first step to take.

Imagine walking outside to your garden and seeing all the food you've worked hard to grow yourself. Picture yourself cooking dinner using all the fresh ingredients you grew yourself. Something about growing your own food just feels good. It is rewarding because you know that you did it yourself and that all the work you put in paid off. This is true about being

self-sufficient in general. Taking care of yourself feels good, and knowing how to grow your own food is a valuable skill. You need food to survive. Being self-sufficient is about being able to provide for yourself. You don't have to worry about others letting you down because you can do it all yourself.

With things so readily available in today's world, you may ask yourself why being self-sufficient is so important. What is the point of growing your own food when you can just walk to the store and buy it? Well, one of the main reasons people strive to be self-sufficient is the opportunity to save money. When you are growing your own food, living within your means, and saving whenever possible, you feel better about yourself. There is less stress about money, and you are free to do the things that really matter to you. You aren't held down because you owe someone money or a favor, and you don't have to worry about relying on others.

Part of being able to take care of yourself without the help of others is living within your means. Only buy what you need and ensure you are always getting the best deal possible. Being frugal goes a long way when you are working toward being completely self-sufficient. When you are working toward this goal, it is essential that you also have a healthy mind. Self-sufficiency is hard work, and it takes time to get into a routine. Taking care of yourself and your mind makes all the little things that come along with survival seem a little less stressful. Gardening is great for your health, and you can choose what you want to grow, which means you can choose what you want to eat. You can produce any type of food you want in your garden, which is part of what makes it such a fantastic option.

Getting into the right state of mind or the proper mode for self-sufficiency starts with forming habits. Trying something new is exciting and can cause you to let some of the finer details slip through the cracks. By working at something every day and building new habits, doing these things becomes a little easier until, eventually, it is just another part of your daily life. It is something you take care of without ever even having to think about it. How you want to live is another crucial thing for you to consider. There are many different ways to grow your own food, and while some may think you need

to jump up and change everything about your life to make that happen, it isn't true.

You can still do all the things you normally do while growing your own food simultaneously. Many different plants and vegetables are easy to care for and are likely to produce great food that you can be proud of. Self-sufficiency takes time and dedication. A lot of work goes into it, and you have to be able to keep up with it. When it comes to gardening, some days will be more challenging than others, but in the end, it will be well worth it. It is important that you start small because the last thing you want to do when working toward self-sufficiency is rush things.

When you are self-sufficient, you are reducing your impact on the environment. When you shop for food from your local grocery store, a lot of the food you see is imported. This is how the food that is out of season is available year-round. For that food to get to your local grocery store, it needs to be shipped, requiring cars, boats, and planes. All these things negatively impact the environment. Many of these foods are also highly processed to ensure they stay fresh long enough to make it to your table.

There are many ways to be self-sufficient, and the first thing you want to do is think about the type of life you want to live. Depending on where you live, you may dream of having a large garden that grows enough food to sustain you and your family. You may even consider raising animals at some point. Or if you live in the city, you may just want to have a small garden to grow all your vegetables. Being self-sufficient takes a lot of work and dedication. It isn't always easy, but it is always rewarding.

## ***Top Reasons to Start Your Own Garden***

Gardening isn't just about beautifying the landscape or adding more oxygen to the environment; it has a lot to do with our physical and mental well-being. This may be surprising to some, but gardening can even help you fight disease. Research estimates that just half an hour of sunlight can produce between 8,000 and 50,000 internal units (IU) of vitamin D depending on a variety of factors, such as the amount of clothing you are

wearing and skin tone (Sullivan, 2020). This is important because vitamin D is crucial for the body to function correctly. It can strengthen your bones and immune system and even reduce your risk for certain cancers.

When vitamin D levels are low, there can be serious consequences, such as increased risks for dementia and diabetes. It is also possible to develop skin cancer when you spend too much time in the sun, so you need to ensure that your vitamin D levels are well-balanced.

Gardening is great because it allows you to get plenty of time in the sun without having to overdo it. When you are growing your own food, it can help you become stronger, help you sleep better, and even help you maintain a healthier weight. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that gardening is an exercise (Sullivan, 2020). Cutting grass can be considered moderate exercise, whereas digging may be vigorous exercise. When you are gardening, you are working every muscle in your body, and you will definitely feel the effects after spending a long day out gardening.

Because gardening is considered an exercise, it is possible for gardening to even help improve your memory. Exercise improves brain function, which can be incredibly beneficial for your memory. When you exercise, your body releases chemicals that help reduce inflammation, help you lose weight, improve blood pressure, and even prevent depression. Gardening can be therapeutic and make you feel good, and you are giving your mind something else to focus on and something that you can be proud of. It can even help improve your mood and reduce stress.

Gardening can also teach you to be patient because, as with most good things in life, nothing happens overnight. When you are growing your own food, it is a process, and it is something you need to keep up with. You can't just step away from gardening because when you do this, you risk losing your plants. Growing your own food helps you connect with nature in ways you couldn't otherwise. It is gratifying to see all your hard work pay off once you are ready to harvest your plants.

You can make your garden any way you want, which is one of the best things about gardening. You can grow the types of foods that you love, and you can have a good time while doing it. Growing your own food is also an



excellent way to get organic vegetables without paying the crazy prices you see at the store. You know exactly what is going into the plants you are growing in your home, so you don't need to be concerned about what you are potentially putting into your body that isn't necessarily good for you. With your own garden, you have total control over what goes into your food, and that freedom alone should make growing your own food worth it.

Gardening also has excellent benefits when it comes to the mind. Exercising and spending all that time outside in the sun is great for you, and when you garden every day, you may find that you are feeling better about your life. It can help fight anxiety and depression because the experience of gardening is therapeutic. Gardening has been around forever and has even been proven to help with addiction. Growing food has been used in addiction therapy for years and is proven to help aid in recovery. It gives you something healthy to occupy your mind other than the unhealthy habits you may have grown accustomed to.

Food has always been an excellent way to bring people together, and it is no different when it comes to growing that food. When you garden with others, you can build a strong connection with them. You can learn from them, and you can experience nature together. When you garden, you feel a sense of empowerment and accomplishment. You did something beneficial for yourself, and you can feed yourself something you can be proud of. It makes you feel as though you can care for yourself and gives you a sense of purpose.

Many people have been doing their best to be more self-sufficient and eco-friendlier in recent years, including various celebrities. Gwyneth Paltrow has been known for promoting sustainable living and eco-friendly habits, and she even shares recipes for healthy food that tastes good and is enjoyable to make. Other celebrities such as Emma Watson, Jessica Alba, and Rosario Dawson also do their part to promote healthy habits and sustainable living. When you garden and grow your own food, you are helping yourself, and you are helping the environment. Gardening to grow your own food has many incredible benefits. Whether you are doing it to be self-sufficient, to save money, or because you want a new hobby, there is always a reason to take up gardening.

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## **Chapter 2: Gardening Essentials for Beginners**

This chapter will supply you with all the knowledge you need to have a healthy and sustainable garden. A lot goes into starting your own garden and maintaining things. Getting started can be one of the most challenging parts of gardening because a lot of planning goes into it. Gardening to grow your own food isn't as simple as walking into the store, buying some seeds, and planting them in the ground once you get home. It takes a lot more care to grow your own food, and knowing what you are doing and what you will need is crucial.

You want to have an idea of what you want to grow and how much space you will need to make things work. There are also plenty of tools and other various things you will need to prepare for. Thankfully, this chapter is meant to answer all your questions and ease all your concerns so that you can jump right into gardening with the confidence that you will succeed.

### **What Beginners Need to Know**

When you start thinking about growing your own food, there are a lot of things that you will want to consider. Growing your own food is a unique and rewarding experience, but you also need to know what you are doing because a lot of work goes into it. Some foods are more challenging to grow than others, and some are easy. Some plants can be huge and take up a lot of space, and some don't. For these reasons, you must know precisely what you want to grow before making the commitment. Plants are all different, and different plants have different needs. What may work well for one plant may not work well for the other.

When deciding to grow your own food, one of the first things you will want to do is set some goals. You need to know what you want out of your garden if it is going to be successful. What kind of food are you going to grow, and how much? Did you simply want to try your hand at growing

some new herbs for your kitchen? Or maybe growing some strawberries or peppers is something you want to try. Knowing what you wish to achieve makes reaching your goals more manageable and will ensure you are getting everything you want from your garden.

When you have goals, you give yourself an idea of what you want to see out of your garden, and when you know what you want out of it, it becomes easier to achieve your goals. Know what you have to work with and make your goals accordingly. Some plants need more space to grow, some need bigger containers, and some need more sunlight. This is all information you should keep in the back of your mind when you are trying to decide what you want out of your garden.

Before you buy anything, make sure that you know where you are going to place your garden. Is there a lot of sun there? Is it a heavily shaded area? Are you planning to grow indoors? All of these things can majorly impact your garden because plants need different amounts of sunlight. When you are shopping for the plant you are going to grow, it is important to check the sunlight requirements for it and make sure that the location of your garden meets those requirements.

The season is also an essential thing to consider when buying the plants you want to grow because some won't grow during certain seasons and other things thrive. It is necessary to know what you are growing and what season it will do best. Each plant has a growing zone that indicates which season they do the best in, and this is something you will want to study before buying any plants. If you purchase a fruit or vegetable that does well in spring but then try to grow it in the summer or fall, you may not have the best results. Of course, if the plant is close enough to the season, you may be able to adjust the plant's environment accordingly and get away with it so long as you are careful.

Remember that gardening isn't something you just check on a few times a day. It requires constant time and attention, and if you neglect it, your plants will die. When you first start out, you may love spending hours in your garden tending to your plants; however, over time, you may find that you really don't want to spend every moment of your free time tending to your plants. Time management is essential when caring for plants, so it is crucial



that you only plant what you are able to maintain. You may be excited to try growing all sorts of new things, but you should always start small and work your way up. You really don't want to overwhelm yourself when you are first getting started.

Knowing your limitations is essential when it comes to caring for your garden because, even though it is something that is fun and that you enjoy doing, it is still work. It takes a lot to maintain, and there will be days when you are sore and don't really want to do it. This is why knowing your limits is so important. Sure, one day, you may be feeling great and have all sorts of energy to spend with your plants, but then on other days, you may not be willing to do much of anything. When you have a big garden and the days come around when you aren't feeling well and don't want to deal with the heat, it can be challenging to get yourself motivated to care for your plants. Regardless of how much you may love gardening, you should always be careful not to take on more than you can handle.

Gardening isn't neat or clean and requires you to get your hands dirty. You will need to dig through the dirt and bugs, and you will need to inspect your plants and care for them. This means that you will most likely want to have a specific set of clothes you plan to use for your gardening. Your clothes are likely to get stained, your shoes will get muddy, and your skin will sweat. These are all perfectly normal parts of gardening, and some plants tend to be messier than others. It is vital that when you are working outside for long periods, you make sure you are wearing sunscreen and gloves. There are plenty of things in most gardens that can cause injury, and because of this, you will want to be sure you are taking precautions when you are working.

Finally, you want to look at your budget. While growing your own food is certainly cheaper than shopping at the store, there are still certain costs that you will want to keep in mind. How much are the seeds going to cost? What will you grow them in, and what types of soil and fertilizer will you use? Where are you going to place these plants, and do you need to enclose them in anything? You will want to ensure that you have everything you need for your garden to thrive before you even begin, and part of that is calculating expenses. Try to buy things on sale when you can, and always keep your eye out for the next best deal.

## ***Taking Care of the Basics***

Regardless of where you live, it is possible for you to grow your own food; all you need is sunlight, soil, water, humidity, wind, and weight. All of these things can be managed in just about any setting, but you need to know the types of plants you will be growing. If you are growing fruit of some kind, you will want to be sure that you are getting your plants a full day of sunlight, and you will want to ensure they can get up to eight hours of sun each day.

Something else that you may not think about when starting your garden is the type of soil you use. Simply placing your plants in regular soil or just digging a hole in your backyard and expecting plants to grow isn't the best idea. Each plant has different needs, and the type of soil you use is crucial to the health and longevity of your plants. Some plants don't do well in a particular soil and could die from it. When growing plants in your garden, you will want easy draining soil because you don't want a lot of water sitting around the roots of your plants. If the soil doesn't have good drainage or is too tightly packed, it is harder for the roots to get the proper nutrients.

If your soil is thin and crumbly, you may want to try getting some new soil. Thin and crumbly soil usually indicates that there are few to no nutrients in the soil. Thankfully, there are things you can add to the soil that will help restore some of the nutrients, such as compost and even coffee grounds. If you are using clay soil, you will most likely need to add nutrients to it every season. When you add nutrients to your soil, you want to make sure that you are really working it in and not just letting it sit on the surface. You want to ensure that you are getting the proper nutrition to all parts of the soil so that it can supply your plants with the necessary nutrients.

Certain plants excel in nearly any type of soil, but some need a particular soil to suit their needs. Depending on the type of plants you are planning to grow, you may want to check the PH levels of your soil. This will help you figure out where you want to start and ensure that your plants are getting everything they need to thrive. Of course, with your need for soil, there will also come a need for water. Before you get started with your garden, you

want to find out how much water it will take to keep your plants hydrated and healthy.

This can also help you determine what type of plants you will get. If you live somewhere dry, chances are you don't want to get a plant that only does well in tropical climates. The amount of water you will need to give your plants depends on various factors, including the size of your garden, what types of plants you are growing, and your climate.

When planning to grow your plants inside, you will want to account for the humidity in your home. Certain plants require more humidity, and this is something you will want to keep an eye on. If you are growing your plants outside, be sure to get plants that thrive with the climate you live in. Something else to consider with outdoor plants is the wind. There are times when the wind can get very aggressive and damage plants particularly if your garden is on the roof or balcony. High winds can be dangerous for plants, so if there are going to be high winds coming your way, you may want to take precautions with your plants. Also, keep in mind the weight of your plant. If it is a plant you have in a small container, it is likely to blow over during high winds. If your plant is heavy, you will want to be careful where you place it because you don't want it to fall and end up damaged.

Once you've mastered the basics, you are nearly ready to move on to the next step of making your garden a reality. Find the plants you want to grow and ensure that wherever you place them, you are doing your best to meet their complete requirements. Happy and healthy plants start with good gardening knowledge. If you make mistakes, in the beginning, that's okay. Just keep trying, and eventually, gardening will simply become part of your everyday routine.

## ***Identifying Your Hardiness Zones***

The hardiness zone of your location is one of the first things you will need to take into consideration when getting started with your garden. It is crucial because it will determine the types of plants you grow and when you grow them. Many plants are great at adapting to new environments while

others are not. Some plants don't do well in the cold, and when a sudden frost sets in, they stand no chance. You can check your hardiness zone by looking at the map provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). This map is based on the lowest average minimum temperatures, and it uses data from multiple weather stations and divides the country into 13 zones.

The hardiness map collects data from the average minimum temperatures over a 30-year period to determine the hardiness zones (Hassani, 2022). When buying plants, you always want to check the hardiness label to ensure you will be able to meet the plant's needs. Typically when you shop locally, the plants you buy from the store will already be for your current zone, but when shopping online, you must do your research.

Your hardiness zone won't tell you everything about the weather, and there are always going to be unexpected things that come up, but it is an excellent place to start. The weather where you live is incredibly important because certain plants don't do well in certain climates. If you are trying to grow something that isn't suitable for the environment you offer, chances are that you won't have much luck. You always want to keep an eye out for extreme temperature fluctuations because this is something the hardiness map doesn't account for. While it is essential to know your hardiness zone because it will give you a good idea of what temperature you should be growing your plant in, it shouldn't be the only thing you pay attention to.

You need to understand your plants and everything that goes into caring for them. There are many things to consider, but once you've gotten a grasp on the type of plants you want and how to properly care for them, you can move on to the next step of determining where you are going to place your garden and how you wish to have it set up.





## **Chapter 3: Garden, Garden...Everywhere!**

Not everyone has good access to outside space to start a garden. This can be very frustrating when you want to try to grow your own food but don't necessarily have the outdoor space to do so. Thankfully, there are particular foods and herbs that do just fine when grown indoors. Growing indoors is different from growing outdoors, and there are many things you will want to consider before you fully commit. What can you grow indoors? How much space do you have? Is there access to good sunlight? These are all things you will want to ask yourself before getting started.

### **An Insight into Home Gardening**

Home gardening can be a fun and healthy activity for anyone, but just because you want to start a garden doesn't always mean you have the space for it. If you have the desire to start growing your own food but live in an apartment, then it is crucial for you to do your research. Growing indoors isn't the same as growing outdoors; some of your plants may require extra care. Indoor gardening is ideal for many reasons. If you have a good space set up for an indoor garden, it is a lot easier to regulate temperature and ensure that your plants are getting all the requirements for proper growth. With an outdoor garden, you have to rely on the season and the temperature outside, but with an indoor garden, it is possible for you to successfully grow certain plants all year round without issues.

Some common methods used for indoor gardens include hydroponics, herb gardens, terrariums, air plant collections, and living walls. Hydroponic designs are great when the soil you have outside won't suffice or if you don't have the time to deal with things such as weeds and pests. This is also a great way to conserve water. These gardens are great for producing herbs and veggies all year round.

Herbs are relatively easy to grow, and as long as you have a window that gets plenty of sunlight, your plants can thrive all year long. Herbs also tend to do great on windowsills. If the plants you are looking into growing are going to require a lot of humidity, you may want to consider using a terrarium. These are great options because they don't take up a lot of space, and you can easily select plants that are low maintenance to place inside.

Air plant collections are usually for if you are looking into growing any kind of epiphytic plants or plants that don't grow in soil. Epiphytic plants are a type of plant that receive their nutrients from the air and the moisture surrounding them.

Finally, there are living walls, typically used when you don't have a lot of space elsewhere for your plants. When selecting the plants you want for your living wall, you will want to ensure that all the plants you get have similar care requirements. If you don't, it could make caring for them very tedious.

## ***Basics of Gardening in Tiny Spaces***

As amazing as gardening is, unfortunately, not everyone has the space to make it happen. Thankfully, there are many creative ways for you to work around this and still find ways to create your own garden, even with limited space. One of the most important things you will want to keep in mind when working with limited space is the amount of sunlight you are getting to your plants. If you keep them somewhere that is constantly dark, then chances are that your plants won't do well. All plants need sunlight to sustain their health; without it, they don't get everything they need and will more than likely die.

If you are keeping your plants in your window, then it is a good idea to rotate them every so often to avoid sun damage. While all plants need sun, too much direct sunlight can be harmful and burn the plant. If you are keeping your plants in small pots and you notice the weather is nice, you may want to consider moving them outside, which will help ensure that your plants get all the sunlight they need to thrive.

Herbs are great because they don't need a lot of room to grow, which means you can grow them pretty much anywhere. They prefer to be trimmed often, give you an excellent yield, and last for a decent amount of time. You always want to grow something with a high yield when working with small spaces. This is because you don't want to get something that will only be used once. You want to give your plants the chance to regrow in between clippings. When you are growing your own food, especially in small spaces, you want to ensure you are growing something you will use a lot of. Lettuce is great for growing indoors because it has a high yield and can be used for many different dishes, such as salads or sandwiches.

The size of the pots you are using will also make a massive difference because different plants have different needs. Not everything will fit in a small pot that you can place on the windowsill. You want to get a pot that is slightly bigger than your plant because it will need plenty of room to grow. If you end up using a pot that is too small, it can make things more stressful, and you will need to pay closer attention to how many seedlings you decide to grow because there won't be a lot of room. With a bigger pot, you are giving your plants more room to grow and a better chance at reaching maturity while maintaining their health.

Plants need nutrients to thrive, so you must ensure you are fertilizing your plants, particularly if you are growing them indoors. Indoor plants are not exposed to the same elements as outside plants, so ensuring they have everything they need to thrive is crucial. When you water your plants, it flushes out some of the nutrients in the soil, and those nutrients need to be replaced. This is where fertilizer comes in. You will need to ensure you are fertilizing your plants regularly, so they get everything they need to remain healthy. Different plants have different needs, and some herbs don't require fertilizer at all, so it is essential you know your plants and their requirements.

The amount of water you give your plant is something else you will need to keep a very close eye on. Overwatering is easy to do, and to avoid it, sometimes people end up underwatering them. Watering your plants is a balancing act. You don't want to give them water to the point they drown, but you also want to be careful about giving them too little. When they

don't have enough water, they will dry up and wither. Plants tend to get very stressed out when they aren't getting the proper amount of water, which can cause them to stop producing. This is another reason why knowing your plants inside and out is so important.

If you are still intending to grow your plants outside but have a small yard or a minimal amount of space, think about all the ways you can utilize that space instead of getting frustrated. You must know how to work with what you have, especially when it comes to gardening.

Keep a journal that lists everything you want to grow and all the requirements for those plants. While you are growing, you will want to add to this journal. Try new things, find what works and doesn't, and record your findings. A journal is a great way to ensure your plants are getting what they need, and it also helps keep you from making the same mistake more than once. This is incredibly helpful if you are growing multiple different things at once. Sometimes, when caring for a lot of plants at once, it can be easy to confuse their care.

A journal can help you keep better track of some of this information. It will help you become more organized and can help you better understand your plants and how they grow in your particular climate. Your journal can also help you map out your garden and give yourself a good idea of how you want it to look. This can help you decide where you will place certain plants, and it will also help you determine how you will care for them. There are many different ways to garden, but you must do what works best for you. Utilize every bit of space you have and get to know your plants.



## ***On to Survival Gardening***

You now know the basics of gardening and what you can expect once you get down to working with the soil. Now, it is time to get to the basics of survival gardening and progress toward learning the art of getting self-sustainable. There are many reasons why being self-sufficient is important. Imagine living paycheck to paycheck as so many people are, and then you suddenly lose your job. This will impact your life, but when you grow your own food, this can ease at least some of the stress.

A survival garden is a garden capable of providing you with everything you need to get by when it comes to nourishment. These are great to have because if, for some reason, you end up in a tight spot financially, you don't have to worry about going hungry. Life is impossible to predict, and you never know what will happen. Sometimes unexpected things happen. If you



are in a good place in your life, then you may feel as though having a survival garden isn't necessary, but the truth is that things could change in a moment. You never know what new challenges life will throw at you and always having a reliable food source is never a bad idea.

A survival garden should provide enough food to sustain you and your family without relying on any other source for your food. When you are starting out, there are a few easy-to-grow vegetables you can try, such as peas, carrots, bush beans, and potatoes. These are great to start out with, though as you become more accustomed to gardening, you will want to try out plants that will give you a few more calories, such as winter squash, corn, sunflower seeds, and beans. Sunflower seeds and peanuts are great because they help supply your body with the proper amount of fat.

Of course, you will need to consider what you will do in the winter months. Many plants don't grow in the winter and either die off or go dormant, So, you will need to start thinking about how you will store your food. Certain things you should consider growing because of their ability to be stored through the winter include beets, carrots, turnips, cabbage, leeks, onion, kale, and rutabaga. Most crops can also be frozen or dried, which keeps them fresh for more extended periods of time.

When working on setting up a survival garden, the main requirements you are going to want to think about are the number of calories you need to be able to provide for yourself and your family. You also need to consider the number of fats and proteins you will be growing. Winter storage is essential, and knowing how to store your crops to keep them fresh is vital, especially if you plan to have your garden become your only source of food. The amount of food you grow will also depend a lot on how many people you plan to feed. If you have a family of three people, you will need to ensure that you are growing enough food to meet everyone's nutritional needs.

A lot of research and skill goes into growing a survival garden. You will want to start small if you are new to gardening. It will take time to build yourself up to where you want to be, but this is no reason to get discouraged. Having a survival garden will save you a lot of money and

ensure that you know your food is safe. You can eat food you are proud of and know you worked hard to grow.

Before you get started with making a survival garden, ask yourself why you are doing it. How important is it for you to grow your own food, and why do you want to do it? What do you wish to accomplish with your garden? What are your opinions about growing your own food? All these questions are essential because they will help you discover your motivation when creating your own garden and producing your own food. There are many reasons for someone to have a survival garden, but you must think about why you want one and how you think it can help you.

Survival gardens take time, and there are so many things you will need to think about when getting started. By doing your research, knowing where you want to grow and what you want to grow, and tracking your progress in your journal, you are bound to be successful. While survival gardening isn't always easy, it is always rewarding. Once you've chosen to create a survival garden, the next step is to figure out what type of garden you need and how you will make it work.



## Chapter 4: Mapping Your Vegetation

Now that you have decided that a survival garden is something you want to do, it is time to learn how to get started. A lot goes into creating a self-sustaining garden, and that hard work eventually pays off in the form of food. Food is necessary for survival, and without it, you would starve. With prices for food constantly on the rise and food recalled for health concerns, growing food has never seemed like a better idea. Find out what you want to grow and see what you can work with. Do your research and pay attention to every detail when it comes to caring for your plants. Every plant has different needs, so before you do anything, you will need to know what you are growing. This will help you ensure all your plants get the proper care they deserve.



# Setting Up Your Garden

When you set up your garden, the first thing you will want to ask yourself is what kind of garden you want. Do you want a calorie-intensive garden? This type of garden is typically filled with calorie-rich vegetables that are great for supplying the body with energy. Your garden should meet all of your nutritional needs, which means you will need to ensure that you are growing food with fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and calories with no other supplementation. You will want to think carefully about the crops you plan to plant in your garden so you will have time to learn about what it will take to care for them.

If a calorie-intensive garden isn't the type of garden you want to commit to, you can also consider a supplemental nutrient garden. This garden helps with long-term food storage and provides wheat, beans, rice, oats, potato flakes, etc. This type of garden will supply you with most of your required calories and is meant to add nutrition, good flavor, and variety to your diet. There are many plants you can grow in this type of garden that are great for improving your diet and saving money. The more food you can produce from this garden, the less you will have to rely on your other stored food. These gardens provide fresh and nutritional food that is great for ensuring you get everything you need to stay healthy.

Emotional boost gardens are also a great type of garden to consider if you are all about preparation. This type of garden is filled with staples that will last you a long time and can easily be freeze-dried. The purpose of this garden is to produce food that will supply you with all the nutrition you need and provide you with emotional satisfaction. The type of foods you eat plays a big part in your mental health. When you aren't eating right or if your body isn't getting everything it needs, it is harder to be happy. You may even find that you are feeling depressed. Gardening can be great for depression, and an emotional boost garden is even better.

Knowing the type of garden you want is essential before getting started because it will determine what you grow, how much you grow, and how you set it up. A lot goes into creating the garden of your dreams, and you

want to take things slow when you first get started because it is easy to get overwhelmed. Breaking things down into steps and figuring out precisely what you want out of your garden can make this process a little easier. Regardless of the type of garden you desire, you will want to ensure that you provide yourself with everything you need to meet your daily nutritional needs. This is especially true if you want your garden to eventually become your only food source.

## ***Deciding on Your Garden Size***

The size of your garden plays a critical role in deciding what you will grow and how much. If space is limited, that's okay. You can still grow your own food. You will simply need to think a bit more carefully about what you will grow. This is one of the first things to consider when setting up your garden because it will determine how you do things in the future. When deciding how big you want your garden to be, you will first want to ask yourself a few questions:

- What are you planning to grow?
- Do you want your garden to be completely self-sufficient?
- How many people do you need to feed?
- How much space do you have?

These are all fundamental questions when starting your garden, and the answers to them will determine exactly how big you want your garden to be. Figuring out the purpose of your garden should be the first thing you do when starting out. The purpose of your garden will determine just about everything when it comes to setting up, so this is the most critical question you will need to ask yourself. If you are going to grow enough food for yourself and your family, you will need a more extensive garden. If you are simply trying to save a few dollars on your weekly store runs and enjoy having fresh food around, you can get away with something smaller.

Next, you will need to consider how many people you will need to feed to ensure your garden is producing enough food. If you are the only person you are growing for, you won't need a huge garden; however, if you are

growing for yourself and the whole family, you will need more space. It is also essential to account for potential visitors throughout the year as this is something you may not account for right away. When you are getting started, there is bound to be some trial and error, and that's okay. This is why keeping a journal can be beneficial. Keep track of what went right and wrong and use this information to improve your garden for next year.

You can also always consider the possibility of growing more than you need to feed yourself and your family and then sell any extra. This is an excellent way to earn a little extra income while keeping your family well-fed. One thing that you will also want to take into account is whether you are going to eat your harvest fresh or if you plan to store it for later use. This is important because not all food is going to store very well. When you plan to eat food when it is fresh, you need to eat it when it is fresh. If you plan for your garden to be your only source of food, then finding ways to preserve it is crucial because when you are unable to grow plants during the winter months, the last thing you need is to run out of food.

How you set up your garden is also essential because you need to ensure that there is plenty of room for all your plants to grow, and you also need to ensure they are getting the proper sunlight and nutrition. Some plants do well when grown together in the same bed and can save you a lot of space, while others will need to be planted separately. Knowing precisely what you are going to grow is vital because it will determine how you set up your garden and how much space you will need. This is something you will want to have worked out before you even begin with the setup because if you change your plans at the last moment, you may find you cannot grow what you wanted.

You will also want to consider how many garden beds you plan to use. Do you plan to use a few of them or are you thinking about simply having one large one? This is important to figure out because it will help you determine how you will set up your garden. Having multiple beds can be nice if you plan to grow a lot for yourself and sell some on the side. Make sure you are also getting the right size bed for your plants. If you don't give them enough room to grow, they are less likely to thrive and produce what you need for food. Some plants work well when grown together, while others



need to be separated. If you have plants that must be grown separately, you will want to consider getting multiple beds. If you end up with multiple garden beds, be sure you are putting at least two feet of distance between them, as this will make it much easier to care for the plants as they get bigger.

Once you've decided on how many garden beds you will use, it is time to start thinking about how often you plan to plant new seeds. You can typically grow up to three gardens per year, each with different plants depending on the season. During the summer, you may want to grow tomatoes and squash, while in the spring, you grow peas, lettuce, and spinach. If you plan to grow during every season, you will want to ensure that you take your garden size into account and adjust as needed per season. What works great for one type of plant might not work well for another, so it is essential to plan out your garden for the year before getting started.

Now that you've got that all figured out, it is time to start really putting some thought into what you want to grow. Figure out what your favorite thing to eat is, and be sure to grow plenty of it. When you grow things you enjoy, you are more likely to eat them, which will help keep you supplied with everything you need to get all your nutrients.

Make a list of everything you want to grow and figure out precisely what you need to do to make that happen. Knowing what you are going to grow is essential when it comes to planning because some plants are large and have high yields, while others are smaller and don't produce as much. So, it is vital to have a good idea of what you want to be getting out of your garden, and growing plants you love to eat can help with this. Finally, you will want to have all the details worked out for how you will care for your garden. Different types of gardening styles require different size gardens. If you are simply trying to supplement a little bit of your store-bought diet with fresh vegetables, you may not need a lot of space or a big garden.

Still, when you are growing all your own food and relying on your garden as your primary source of nutrients, you will need a lot more space because you will need to grow a lot more food. This is something you will need to put a lot of thought into because it is what is going to help your garden run as smoothly as possible. You don't want to run into all sorts of problems

when trying to care for your garden and this is why planning is so important.

Getting your garden ready to produce all the food you need takes a lot of work. There are many things for you to think about and keep track of before ever getting started, if you take the time to plan things out, you will have a significantly better chance of growing a thriving and self-sustaining garden.

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## **Chapter 5: Getting Your Tools Ready**

When tending your garden, your tools matter because they are among the most important things in ensuring your garden will thrive. This means it is vital to know the types of tools you will need. If you are looking to grow a real garden you can be proud of and where you can grow all your own food, chances are you will want to start from scratch. What this means is you will want to grow everything from seeds instead of purchasing already grown plants from the store. Thankfully, there are a ton of great gardening tools available that will make your life significantly easier and help you produce the best possible quality of food.

One of the most important things you will want to look into is seed starting containers. Getting started with growing plants isn't always as easy as putting the seed into the ground and then waiting. Sometimes seeds need a little bit of help to get them to do what you want. You cannot control what happens with the weather, and sometimes things don't always work in your favor. When you have the proper tools, it can make situations like this far less stressful. This chapter will walk you through everything you need to have the perfect garden in which you can take pride.



## Seed Starting Containers

Seed starting containers can be a lifesaver for growing plants from just a seed. You can either buy seed starting containers from your local gardening store or make your own. Fancy seed starting containers aren't necessary, but they can help make things a little easier. Just about any container you can find can be used as a seed starting container as long as it can hold at least two inches of soil. Make sure that whatever container you use can't be damaged by water because you will need to water your seeds regularly. Plastic containers usually work the best as they aren't damaged by water and are resilient.

Your seed starting container should have holes on the bottom as this will ensure that your plants' roots have all the room they need to grow. You want the water you give your plant to have somewhere to escape, as most plants don't like having their roots sitting in water. If you leave your plants' roots sitting in water for too long, you risk rotting. Because of this, the holes on the bottom of your container are an absolute must.

Some of the best options for seed starter containers include things like peat pots, flats, individual containers, DIY containers, and soil blocks. Peat pots are great because they are all natural and made entirely from peat. You can plant the seeds in the pot, and once they grow into seedlings, you simply cut out an X in the bottom of the pot and place the pot in the ground.

Flats are classic and commonly used seed starting containers. These are an excellent choice if you are starting out and want something simple. They are large rectangular containers with a lot of space for your seeds and soil. When using flats, you may find some of the roots of your plants tangling with each other because there is no divider used to separate the plants. These are usually the most accessible and cheapest option available when it comes to getting your seeds started. Another option that you may want to look into is individual containers.

Individual containers are what they sound like, and they are a place for you to put your plants individually. You can use peat pots, paper pots, soil blocks, etc. The point of these is so you can have total control over the environment of your seedlings. Soil blocks are individual containers that are usually compressed into a cube. These tend to dry out a bit more than other options for seed starters, but the real benefit is that they can be planted right in the ground once they are ready.

Then, of course, it is always possible to make your own. Plenty of basic household items can be easily used as seed starting containers, and they tend to work just as well as other methods. Some examples of things that can be used as seed starting containers include plastic egg cartons, clean plastic pudding cups, milk cartons, and paper cups. Each of these things works just as well as the other options listed though you will need to remove them before you plant your seedling in the ground. A few other options that also work great include egg shells, old toilet paper rolls, and citrus peels.

### ***Seed Starting Mix***

It is important to add “soilless mix” to the soil to prevent disease in saplings. Seed starting mix is readily available at most garden supply stores

or online. However, it can also be prepared right at home. Whatever soil you plan to plant your seeds in, the ground has to be fertile because, if it isn't, your plants won't be getting the right amount of nutrients. You want your soil to be rich with everything your plants need to thrive, and you also want to ensure it has the proper PH balance. This means that you will need to find the right seed starting potting mix for the plants you intend to grow.

Thankfully, most seeds already contain most of the nutrients they need to grow, so it isn't necessary to purchase nutrient-rich soil right off the bat. You can save this until it is time to transplant the seedlings. Once the first leaves begin to grow on the seedlings, you will need to add more nutrients or fertilizer to your soil.

Whatever soil you choose, you will need to ensure that there is plenty of space for air to circulate around the roots. The new roots need plenty of oxygen to grow, and when you don't have enough space in the soil, that can't happen. Having the proper air space also ensures your plant gets the right amount of humidity and water. You also need to ensure that your plant is getting the appropriate moisture. New seeds need a lot of water to grow, so whatever mix you choose, you will want to make sure it can hold enough moisture.

It is also essential to look out for soil without toxic substances or weed seeds. Unfortunately, it probably isn't the best idea to use the soil from your garden to grow your plants, particularly if you've ever sprayed pesticides or chemicals. Those chemicals seep into the soil and kill the seedling before it even has the chance to grow. It isn't unlikely that there are a lot of weed seeds in your average soil at home, and weeds can be a major problem in your garden and can be very difficult to get under control. When trying to get the proper soil for your plants, your best option is to buy new fresh soil at the beginning of each season.

When you buy fresh soil, you can be confident that there won't be any weed seeds or toxic chemicals in your soil, and you will also know that it is the right consistency for your needs. One very commonly used potting mixture includes one part of compost, which is excellent for feeding the seeds when they start growing. It also has one part perlite, which helps allow for the proper airflow to the plant's roots, then finally, one or two parts peat moss or coconut husk. The type of soil and potting mix you use is essential to the



growth of your plants, so you will want to do everything you can to ensure you are getting the correct type of potting mix. There should always be room for the roots to breathe, and the mixture should be able to hold moisture without completely drenching the plant.

## ***Tending Your Garden***

When it comes to tending your garden, there are plenty of tools you will want to ensure you have. Gardening is hard work, which is why you must ensure you have everything you need before ever getting started. The following is a list of tools and why they are absolutely essential for a thriving garden.

- **Gardening Gloves:** While these are not necessarily required for gardening, they are certainly something you won't regret having around. The main reason for having gloves is to help save your hands from things like blisters and abrasions when digging or pruning. Gardening can be rough on your hands sometimes, and having a good set of gloves can make your life much easier. When shopping for gloves, you will want to get something with a nitrile coating.
- **Rain Gauge:** The purpose of this tool is to measure precipitation to help you better prepare your garden for the season. You will need to have a good idea of how much rain is falling if you have an outdoor garden because the amount of water getting to your plants is something you should always be thinking about. A rain gauge will help you accurately measure how much rain is falling in your area and if you have a gardening journal, this is something you will want to write down. Keeping track of rainfall will help you know how to care for your plants and ensure they are getting all they need to maintain proper health.
- **Shovel and Hoe:** These are essential tools because they give you more flexibility than a spade. Shovels typically have a sharp tip, making it easy for them to get into the dirt. Hoes are used for loosening up the soil and helping with weed removal. You should try to get a shovel

with a longer handle, as those with shorter-length handles tend to be harder on your back.

- **Soil Thermometer:** This can be a handy tool because it will help ensure that you are planting your seeds in the perfect temperature soil for their needs. It also eliminates the need to go solely off gardening guides and removes a lot of the guesswork.
- **Trowel:** Potentially, one of the most valuable tools you can have in your garden is the trowel. It is a multipurpose tool that allows you to easily dig, scoop, weed, and plant. They come in different blade shades and have either long or short handles, depending on your preference. They are also great at measuring the depth of your seeds.
- **Watering Can:** There are many options for watering cans, and not all of them are great. You will want to choose your watering can carefully and ensure that you are getting one suitable for your size garden. Usually, it is best to go with something that can hold at least one to two gallons of water. You will also need to ensure the watering can you are using is made of heavy-duty plastic or galvanized steel.
- **Cultivator:** This is yet another essential long-handled tool you will want to have for your garden. The purpose of this tool is to break up crusty soil and prepare it for watering and fertilizing. This tool is also excellent when it comes to removing weeds.
- **Pruners:** These tools are an absolute necessity when cutting live plants. Pruners stay sharp for a long time, and this is something you will want to get in high quality. This tool will help you harvest your vegetables and keep your plants trimmed.
- **Trash Can:** You most likely already have a place to store your trash, but when it comes to gardening, it is never a bad idea to get an extra can just for this. There are many things you will need to throw away when you garden, and it can be incredibly helpful if you have a decent enough size trash can to store it all.

Now that you know what tools you will need when tending to your garden, you will want to think about what you will need to store your food once it is ready to harvest. Caring for your plants as they grow is only one part of the

process. Now that you have an idea of what tools you will need, you need to know how to properly store your produce.

### ***Harvesting and Storing Your Produce***

When the time comes to harvest and store your plants, you want to ensure that you are prepared and that everything you need is ready to go. Food doesn't last forever, and when you harvest your crops, you only have a limited amount of time to store them before they go bad. This is why having all the tools you need to help you correctly harvest is essential. You don't want to start your garden without thinking ahead about these things because before you know it, it will already be time to harvest, and you don't want to be caught unprepared when the time comes. Here is a list of all the things you will need to ensure an easy and stress-free harvest:

- **Bucket or Basket:** When you are shopping for a bucket or basket to harvest your food in, you want to ensure you are getting one made for harvesting. The reason for this is that baskets and buckets designed for harvesting stack together nicely and help protect your food to prevent it from getting damaged. How you place things in a harvesting bucket or basket matters a lot, too, and because of this, you will want to know exactly what you are growing. There are different types of buckets and baskets, depending on what you are growing, so it is important you get the right one for you.
- **Garden Knife:** While you may be wondering why you need a knife for gardening, you will quickly learn that it can become one of your most invaluable tools. The blade of a garden knife is usually serrated, making it great for sawing through roots or other things in your garden. The blade is typically 11-15 inches. They are lightweight and come in several different types.
- **Spray Bottle:** These are great for products that easily wilt, like lettuce. With a spray bottle, you can keep your product looking fresh by keeping it properly hydrated. You will want a bottle that has no more than a light mist when it sprays as water in highly concentrated streams can damage the produce.
- **Pruning Shears:** These are used mainly to remove diseased, damaged, or dead stems from your plants. You always want to remove dead

parts of your plant because the dead branches will attract bugs, which can lead to an infestation and potentially risk infections for your plants. There are many different types of pruners, so you must find out which type will work best for you before getting started.

Once you've harvested your produce, you must know how to store it so it stays fresh. Certain products such as pears, plums, and apples produce ethylene gas, which isn't suitable for other products, so you should store them separately. You should have a space to store your crops before you even harvest so that, once you have all your crops harvested, there is no rushing around and stressing about where you are going to store it all. It is essential to find the best storage method for the specific food you plan to grow before getting started.

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## Chapter 6: The Different Styles of Gardening

Everyone has their own certain way they like to do things, and it is no different when it comes to gardening. There is a lot to consider when deciding to start your own garden, and if you want your garden to thrive, you must think carefully about the gardening style you will use:

- What kind of tools will you need?
- How are you going to set up your garden?
- How much time are you willing to put into caring for your plants?
- How much space do you have?

These are essential questions you will want to ask yourself when it comes to figuring out the perfect style of gardening for you and your needs. With the proper knowledge and research, you can have the garden of your dreams.

There are many different styles of gardening for you to consider when you are starting out, which is why doing your research is essential. You will also want to keep in mind that just because you start out using one method doesn't mean you'll be stuck with it forever. Sometimes creating the perfect garden just takes a little trial and error.

As you gain more experience gardening and expand your garden, your methods will likely change. This is okay, and you should do what works best for you. Of course, before you can decide which style of gardening works best for you, it is crucial that you know what different styles there are.

- **Container Gardening:** This method is exactly what it sounds like and is when you grow your plants in containers. With this method, you can use a few different things, including buckets or planters. This method typically works great for things like tomatoes, root vegetables, and peppers. Even lettuce can be grown this way. This method is excellent if you don't have a lot of space or are only looking to plant a few things.
- **Inground Gardening:** This is when you plant your seeds in the ground after it has been tilled and fertilized. Just about anything can grow with this type of garden, so long as you have healthy soil and you are

taking care of it. This is a popular gardening style and can work with any amount of space, depending on what you are trying to grow.

- **Raised Bed Gardening:** This is a prevalent form of gardening because it is a lot easier on your back than getting down on your hands and knees in the dirt. It also looks very nice in the yard and doesn't take up too much space. This method also makes it easier to care for the soil and prevent weeds.

These gardens can also grow just about any type of vegetable. One of the primary things you will want to keep in mind when it comes to this method of gardening is you need to be able to have space outside to place it. These types of gardens do not work well indoors, but they are small enough to where you can still use them even with a small yard.

- **Vertical Gardening:** This method is great because it can be used no matter where you live. It can be placed nearly anywhere, including places like balconies, fences, and inside. You can purchase a vertical garden set that comes with grow lights. This gardening style can work just about anywhere and is a fun way to grow fresh herbs. One of the downsides to this gardening method is that you are very limited in what you can grow. Obviously, larger or heavier plants will not work well with this method.
- **Hydroponic Gardening:** Instead of planting your plants in soil, they are instead placed in a solution that supplies them with all the necessary nutrients without having to rely on dirt. This method is used for most of the food in your local grocery store. This gardening method requires enough room for a hydroponic set-up. There are small set-ups available, but if you are hoping to grow a decent amount of food, this method will take up a bit more space. One of the significant benefits of this gardening method is the ability to grow whatever plants you desire, regardless of the time of year, so long as you ensure they get the proper sunlight and nutrients.
- **Aquaponics:** This is an exciting method of gardening because it allows you to grow plants and fish. The most impressive thing about this method is that the fish create a living fertilizer for the plants, supplying them with all they need to thrive.



You place the plants in a solution similar to that of hydroponics gardening. Then, once the fish are added to the water, the waste from the fish feeds the plants while the plants work to filter out the water for the fish. It is a sound system that works well for both the fish and the plants. Aquaponic set-ups can be large or small, so they work regardless of the available space. Some of these set-ups are no bigger than a fish tank, making them perfect for growing inside an apartment.

- **Upside-Down Gardening:** This method is great if you don't have a lot of space but still want to grow tomatoes and similar plants. There are containers you can buy that are specially made for growing upside down, or it is even possible to make your own. With this method, your plants will hang out of your way and still produce delicious plants.
- **Square Foot Gardening:** This method requires a bit of growing room but is also great for keeping track of exactly how much space you are using. This method doesn't need as much space as a typical garden, but it can still grow a decent amount of food, depending on the size of your garden.

The idea behind this method is to break up your crops into different sections so you know exactly what you're growing and how much to expect. This method also helps reduce the number of weeds you will need to deal with. So long as you ensure you are meeting all the requirements for your plants, it is possible to grow just about anything in this type of garden.

- **Hanging Gardens:** If you can grow flowers in it, chances are that you can grow vegetables too, and this is the idea behind hanging gardens. Produce like spinach, peppers, cucumbers, and herbs work great with hanging gardens. However, with this method, you also don't want to try and grow any vegetables with a deep root system. You also don't want to grow vegetables that will get too heavy for the basket, such as melons. The great thing about hanging gardens is you can use them just about anywhere, and they don't require a great deal of space, unlike other gardening methods.
- **Edible Landscaping:** This is an excellent method to use if you are unable to grow what you want due to Home Owner Associations

(HOA). This method works by growing edible plants in your yard instead of just pretty plants that are fun to look at. For example, instead of growing a regular tree in your yard, opt for something like an apple tree, or instead of a flowery bush, get something that bears blueberries and raspberries. The point of this method is to grow your own food without causing others to complain because they don't like the sight of your garden.

- **Window Box Gardening:** This method works great when used alongside edible landscaping because it goes with the idea of wanting to grow food without having it be as noticeable. You can grow smaller crops such as pepper, squash, and cucumbers this way, and it is a great way to save space while gardening. Even larger options are available for heavier plants such as strawberries and small watermelons.
- **Greenhouse, Cold Frames, and High Tunnels:** This is when you build a structure over your garden to give your plants protection from the outside elements while still supplying it with everything it needs to thrive. Typically, these buildings are designed to allow light to shine through your crops without allowing too much direct sunlight that could burn and damage them. Just about anything can be grown in these styles of gardens, and some are large enough to plant small trees. This form of gardening requires quite a bit of space, so it isn't for everyone.
- **Keyhole Gardening:** This garden is great for those who don't have much space or simply want a smaller garden. This style of garden is shaped like a circle and has an opening that allows for easy access. It is also built on a slight incline. In the center is a compost pile used to feed the soil all year. This type of garden is great for growing just about anything, including organic food.
- **Lasagna Gardening:** The unique thing about this garden is it is built up in layers. The bottom layer usually consists of compost and then a brown layer of leaves and pine needles, and the outside layer is made up of grass clippings and scraps of vegetables. It should be about two feet deep when you start and compacted as time goes on. This type of gardening works anywhere, and you can grow just about anything with this method provided you have the space.

- **Straw Bale Gardening:** For this style of gardening, you will want to purchase multiple bales of straw and stack them where you would like to start your garden before wetting them. When you wet the straw, it will cause it to compost, and then you will cover this with soil and plant your crops on top of the bales. You can grow quite a bit of food with this method without taking up too much space. Green beans, peppers, and tomatoes work great in this garden style.
- **Core Gardening:** If you want to grow a lot of food but don't necessarily have the time to get it done, this may be the style of gardening that is right for you. You start in a raised bed, dig a trench in the middle before filling it with straw, and then plant your crops right on top. Because the straw will absorb water, you won't need to worry about watering as often. Anything you can grow in a raised garden bed can be grown with this method.
- **No-Till Gardening:** This idea is similar to lasagna-style gardening in the sense that you lay out all your nutrients on the ground before getting started. The first layer should have cardboard or newspaper to keep weeds from invading your plants. The second layer will be your compost, and then you will add wood chips to break down the compost. It is possible to grow nearly anything with this type of gardening, and once it is set up, it is easier to take care of.
- **Hugelkultur Gardening:** For this method of gardening, you will need to make sure you have plenty of wood. You then take that wood and make a pile of it and any other materials you want to use as compost and place all of this into a trench in the ground. Once you have the wood and compost in the trench, you will cover it with dirt, and the materials underneath will help keep your plants supplied with water and nutrients. This method is excellent for growing just about any kind of crop.

Once you are familiar with all the different gardening styles, it is time to figure out which method of gardening you think will work best for you and your needs. With so many various forms, there is a way to garden for everyone.

## Seeds or Saplings: What to Choose

It is possible for plants to be grown from either seeds or seedlings. However, there are certain factors that you need to take into consideration before you actually make a choice to grow the plant. Choosing seedlings over seeds to grow long-season plants is a much better option. Common long-season plants include tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant/aubergine. Alternatively, you could prepare seeds indoors to grow long-season plants. However, care must be taken as the preparation season may take weeks. While seeds may be cheaper, you may not get everything you want out of your plants because they take too long to grow. When it comes to long-season plants, it is always a good idea to purchase seedlings instead of seeds, as they are more likely to give you everything you need out of your plants before the season is up.

Before you decide if you want seeds or seedlings, you will want to ask yourself a few questions. First, you will want to know if the vegetable germinates well from a seed. Next, you will want to ask if the seed will have enough time to mature for the growing season. Seeds take a lot longer to grow and so this is something you will really want to take into consideration. You will also need to figure out if there is any special care you need to take when caring for the seed. Sometimes caring for seeds can come with a few extra steps, which is worth thinking about because you want your plants to have the best possible chance for success. Finally, you will want to ask yourself if the plant transplants well. If the answer is no, then starting from a seed probably isn't the best idea. However, this also depends entirely on your gardening style.

Many answers to these questions will have a lot to do with the climate in your area, which is why it is crucial for you to know your area and what you will be planting. You want to plan your time accordingly when it comes to gardening because there is only a limited amount of time in which you can grow your crops. Whether you decide on seeds or seedlings, it is essential to do your research first. Find out what kind of plants you want to grow and ask yourself what you think will work best for your garden.

## ***Transplanting Garden Plants***

Transplanting is the act of moving your plants from one place to another. There are two ways for this to happen, and one is if you buy your plants from the store and then move them into your garden or move things from one location to another in your own garden. You will want to be very careful when transplanting your plants because the last thing you want to do is harm the roots. When transplanting, the first thing you want to do is very carefully remove the plant from its pot. Once the plant is removed, take a close look at the roots to ensure they are healthy and that they weren't damaged in any way. Next, you will want to place the plant into a prepared hole and ensure the base of the plant is set at the same level as the soil. Once this is done, you will want to loosely pack the dirt around the plant before finally watering your plant.

Before you transplant your plants, you will want to be sure they are ready. Don't rush things because this can stress out your plants. Some plants will need to be planted before the temperature outside gets too warm, while others are warm-season crops and can be weakened by the cold temperatures. You will also need to pay close attention to the temperature of the soil, as this can also affect your plants. Never rush transplanting your plants either, as colder temperatures can actually slow their growth. You also want to ensure you are putting your warm, loving plants out at night so your plant has the chance to adjust to the temperature changes. Sudden temperature changes are likely to stress out or damage your plant.

If you are starting from a seed and not a seedling, pay close attention to how long it takes you to transplant it from the day you started. Doing this will help you determine how long it will take you to grow crops from seeds in the future. Before you transplant into your garden, you will first need to ensure your garden is ready to accept the new plants. Be sure to check the soil and loosen the soil. You will also need to remove weeds or rocks and fertilize the soil to ensure your plants get all the proper nutrients. It also isn't a bad idea to place a tarp over your garden for a few weeks before you plan to transplant, as this will help warm the soil and keep your plants from getting stressed out over a sudden temperature drop.

You don't want the soil in your garden to be compact so do your best to avoid walking or kneeling on the soil. When the soil around your plants is compacted, it is more difficult for air to reach the roots, and your plants won't do as well as they could with loose soil. Anything you bring outside from inside will need some time to adjust and shouldn't just be instantly planted. Doing this will cause the plant to go into shock. Make sure you are giving it plenty of water and take it outside a few times a day, placing it in the shade. You will want to keep this up for about a week as it will help your seedling get acclimated to the outdoors. Always ensure that the soil your seedling is placed in is moist.

Once you have successfully transplanted your plants, you will need to ensure their soil stays moist and never dries out. Your plants need water to survive, and when their soil dries out, the plants won't do well. Until your plants are used to their new environment, it is a good idea to water them at least once a day, more so if you live somewhere with high winds or high temperatures. Be very careful when it is time to place your plant in the ground, as you don't want to cause it to go into shock. Make sure the hole you plan to put the plant in is deep and wide enough for the plant to fit comfortably inside. Once you've got the plant in the hole, you will want to slowly replace the dirt and lightly pat it but don't compact it. Be sure to soak the area around the seedling right away once you've got it planted, as this will help settle the roots, as well as remove any air pockets and keep the plant from going into shock.

It is important to know the type of garden you plan to have before getting your plants. There are many different gardening styles, and finding the one that works for you may take some time. Maybe one year you try a garden bed, and you decide you don't like that method. It is okay to try something new. Get to know your garden and the types of plants you want to grow. Regardless of the amount of space you have available, it is possible to have a beautiful and thriving garden.





## Chapter 7: Setting the Base Right

When you think about gardening, you most likely think about flowers and fresh fruits and veggies, but do you ever think about the type of soil they are grown in? What about potting mixes? There are many options available for ensuring your plants are getting everything they need to thrive, but this information can sometimes be overlooked. Simply planting your plants in the ground most likely isn't going to work. With this chapter, you will learn everything you need to know about how to set up a proper base for your plant, as well as the different types of soil and potting media to help your plants thrive.

### Soil

Soil is one of those things taken for granted in everyday life, and soil is literally and figuratively the foundation of all lifeforms, especially a garden. Think about it: Plants grow in soil and serve as food for us humans, along with many other living organisms. They are an essential piece of the life cycle without which life wouldn't exist. And without soil, plants wouldn't exist.

Soil isn't usually the first thing people think about when they think of gardening. Soil is the dirty side of gardening that no one likes to talk about. You hear all about the beautiful plants people have grown, but you don't really know what it took to get them there. Soil is by far one of the most important parts of gardening because your soil is what holds the roots of your plants, and it is what supplies them with water and nutrients.

Your soil will make your garden thrive and supply you with food, which is why you need to take special care when determining your soil. You don't want to just get something for the sake of it. Different plants have different requirements, and there are quite a few things you will want to look at before deciding on the type of soil you want. When it comes to organic

gardening, you feed the soil to feed the plants. You do this by adding organic matter to your soil, such as earthworms and microorganisms, and they then feed off the soil, and their waste is used to feed the plants. This process creates healthy soil that allows your plants to thrive.

There are a few different textures of soil you can use to grow your plants. When it comes to gardening, soil textures refer to the size of the particles that make up your soil. Sand has the largest particles, which are usually oddly shaped, making them feel coarser and less likely to compact. This is great for plants that need a lot of air reaching the roots. Like sand, silt also has irregularly shaped particles, though they are much smaller. The particles in clay are almost microscopic, and they pack very easily, which doesn't leave much room for air and water to circulate. Then there is sandy loam, which is usually considered the ideal choice for gardening. This soil is made up of a mixture of all the other textures, which makes it great for ensuring your plants are getting all the water and air they need.

The structure of your soil is also critical and refers to how your soil clumps and forms together. You can usually test the structure of your soil by squeezing a bit of it in your hand. If you open your hand and it breaks when you poke it with your finger, it is likely made up of sand. If it takes a bit more pressure to break it, but it still breaks, then you are probably dealing with silt. If, despite all your poking, it doesn't seem to fall apart at all, then that means you are working with clay.

You want your soil to be crumbly as this gives the roots of your plants an easier time working through it. This also makes it easier for air to pass through, and water drains from it, so you don't leave your roots sitting in water to rot. You can help improve your soil structure by tilling, though this is not something you will want to do often. Too much tilling can over till your soil and kill all the helpful insects. If tilling isn't an option, you can always add organic matter to your soil, which will help improve it too. Compost is always something you should consider adding to your soil to keep it healthy and filled with nutrients.

You will want to check the PH level of your soil as different plants will have varying PH requirements. The PH balance is the level of acidity found in the soil, and some plants do fine in a neutral PH while others require a bit

more specific care. If your plant doesn't seem to have issues and is growing well, then more likely than not, the PH balance in your soil is fine. However, if you notice your plants seem to be having issues with nutrients or they are not growing at the rate they should, it may be an excellent time to test your soil. If the PH is off in your soil, it becomes impossible for your plants to access the nutrients they need to survive, regardless of how much you feed them.

PH testers are available at pretty much any gardening center, and they are definitely something you will want to consider before starting your garden. Once you figure out the PH balance of your soil, you will be able to adjust it to meet the requirements for your plants. To add PH to your soil, you will want to add a little bit of lime, and if you're going to lower the PH in your soil, you can add something like sulfur. However, adding these things to your soil is not going to be an instant fix, and in some cases, it can sometimes take months for the soil to register the new PH. You will want to monitor this closely as you don't want your soil to revert to its previous PH balance.

Organic matter is something else you will want to consider for your garden because it can do amazing things to help the garden reach its fullest potential. In nature, decaying organic matter is what feeds the plants. Adding organic matter to your soil can improve its structure and add more nutrients. Some examples of organic matter you can use for your garden include grass clippings, garden waste, leaves, vegetable peels, straw, and manure. Soil is one of the first things you will need to consider when it comes to your garden because, without suitable soil, your plants won't thrive. It is essential to know the needs of your specific plants and what they need in their soil.



## ***Improving Soil Health***

Pesticides sprayed on the plants eventually find their way into our bellies, and there is an endless list of harmful effects they have on our bodies. Synthetic fertilizers are also dangerous for the soil's health, as they kill important microorganisms living in the soil, which renders the soil infertile. Having healthy soil is essential to the health of your plants, so you will want to do everything you can to give your soil all the nutrients it needs to thrive. When you have healthy soil, your plants are less prone to things like pests and disease.

When trying to determine if your soil is healthy, there is much to take into consideration. Simply getting soil and adding fertilizer to it isn't going to ensure that your plants are getting all they need to be happy and thrive. Testing your soil is vital because it will ensure that your soil is the right PH balance for your plants. You may also wonder what you should add to your soil to ensure it is as nutrient-rich as possible, and the answer for this is

simple— compost. When you add compost to your soil, it will help it improve immediately and introduce new microorganisms that will help your soil by breaking down the organic matter. There is no such thing as too much when it comes to compost, and you should add as much as possible to your soil as it is the best thing for it.

You must ensure the soil in your garden isn't compacted. This is a common issue, especially when you have a garden that you walk through. When the soil compacts, it makes it hard for the plants to grow and get the proper amount of air circulating. You should do your best to disrupt your soil as much as possible. When you disrupt your soil, you are also disrupting the ecosystem that lives in that soil. Your soil's ecosystem is critical as it is what keeps your soil healthy and at the right consistency for your plants. Try not to till or dig in your garden unless necessary, as the less you disrupt your soil, the better. When adding organic material to your soil, simply add it to the top one or two inches of the soil. You can even lay your organic material on top, and it will still work fine.

Crop covers are also great for maintaining healthy soil. When your crops are not growing, they are covered and protected, which reduces the risk of erosion. This also helps with enhancing organic matter levels. If you use cover crops with taproots, these can create macropores which allow for more airflow to the roots of your plants. To promote aggregation, you can use fibrous-rooted plants, which will also help stabilize the soil. Cover crops are also excellent at retaining nitrogen and other nutrients to help keep the soil healthy.

When dealing with pesticides, you will need to take special care. Using pesticides can be dangerous, and you are likely to not only kill the harmful insects, but you are also likely to kill those that are beneficial. You must use them as little as possible, if at all. Instead, you want to provide a healthy habitat for all the beneficial insects in your garden. One way to do this is called farmscaping, when you use water reservoirs, insectary plants, hedgerows, and cover crops to attract helpful organisms to your plant. This method helps create an environment where they can thrive and keep your plants healthy and well fed.

If you are looking to start a new garden, you will want to learn a little bit about mulching. This keeps your soil healthy and ensures it has all the nutrients your plants need. When you mulch, it also reduces the need for certain things such as weeding, fertilizing, and even watering. How you mulch your garden depends a lot on where you live. If you are somewhere where it is constantly hot, you will want to use heavier mulch. If you live somewhere cooler, you will most likely want to use a lighter mulch.

Now that you understand that organic matter is essential to your garden, you may be wondering what organic matter is. Organic material comes from living materials that can fix and store carbon and use it to provide a source of energy to the soil. There are three types of organic material, depending on the amount of time it takes to decompose:

1. When your organic matter is active, it consists of residue from fresh plants and animals and can take a few months to fully decompose. In some cases, it may even take years. This particular type of organic matter is alive because it is filled with many active microorganisms.
2. Humus is a stable type of organic matter where the decomposition is complete, and there is no more microbiological activity.
3. Slow organic matter is somewhere between the others and is made up of materials that can take decades to decompose, such as bones.

### ***Potting Mix or Potting Soil?***

Potting mix and potting soil may sound like the same thing, but in reality, there are some significant differences between the two that can make shopping for the suitable medium you want to grow your plants relatively confusing if you don't know what you are looking for. When shopping for soil or mix for your plants, you will want to make sure you are always reading the ingredients listed on the bag; if they aren't listed at all, then you should steer clear of that mix. You want to know exactly what you are giving your plants if you want them to be as healthy as possible.

There are some differences between potting soil and potting mix that you will want to look out for depending on the needs of your plants. When it

comes to potting soil, it may or may not come with garden soil or sand. It also isn't sterile and can carry certain pathogens or diseases. It is also possible it will contain weed seeds, which you really don't want when setting up your garden. Potting mix is different because, unlike potting soil, the mixture does not contain any soil and is also sterile, meaning you don't have to worry about your plants getting a disease fungus.

Potting soil also contains minerals and organic matter along with compost, which is heavy and packs a lot easier. The potting mix contains a mix of different components, each of which helps with aeration and drainage. Some of the materials in your potting mix may include peat moss, sphagnum moss, bark, perlite, or coir. There is also a possibility it contains a slow-starting fertilizer as well. Potting mix is generally lightweight, unlike potting soil.

Now that you know the difference between the two, you may be wondering which one you should use for your garden. If you are doing any kind of container gardening, you will only want to use soilless potting mixes. This will ensure that the mixture stays moist and that you give the roots plenty of room to grow and breathe. Soilless potting mix is much more controlled than typical soil and is much better for your plants, mainly if you are growing in a container.

There are many different types of growing mediums for you to use when it comes to potting mix, and knowing what each one is and what it does can help you figure out the perfect mix for your plants. Bark is very commonly used in potting mediums and is great because of its ability to add drainage and airspace to the mix. It also helps decrease water retention, keeping your plant's roots from sitting in water. This potting medium is usually best for plants that are already fully matured and can't be used for starting seeds. Coir is a by-product of coconuts and is good at providing drainage and water retention. This is a good substitute for peat moss.

The golden-brown specks you see in your potting mix are known as vermiculite. The particles can soak up water and nutrients, holding them in the mix until the plants are ready to absorb them. It can be used to cover seeds that have been sown recently, which will help keep them moist so they can germinate. When you use soil, the surface crust is likely to form a



hard crust when it dries out. You can get vermiculite at your local garden center.

The white pebbles you see in the potting mix are known as perlite. They are volcanic material that has no effect on the PH of your soil or the nutrient quality. This medium is excellent for drainage, air circulation, and water retention. This is sometimes used to prevent sand from leeching certain nutrients.

Coarse sand is used in potting media to help improve drainage and air circulation, though it doesn't retain water.

Finally, there is sphagnum peat moss, and this medium is coarse, lightweight, and sterile. It is great for water retention, though it is challenging to moisten and should be used with other potting mediums. This medium is perfect for germinating seeds.

## ***Fertilizer***

When fertilizing your garden, you may wonder if you should use compost or fertilizer. Maybe you are wondering if you should use both. To really answer these questions, you will first need to know what they are and the differences between them. Since we already covered what compost is made up of, it is time to talk about other types of fertilizer. There are two types of fertilizer: organic and non-organic. Organic fertilizers are made from animal and animal sources and feed the plants. In contrast, non-organic fertilizers are fast-acting and may end up burning or damaging your plants if you are not careful.

Fertilizers are rated through what is known as the NPK ratio system (Gibson & Russel, 2020). This system measures the amount of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. You will need to know your plants and their needs when choosing the right fertilizer. If you find a fertilizer labeled 12/12/12, the fertilizer is balanced. Depending on the needs of your plants, you may want one that is balanced or one that has more nitrogen. This is part of why knowing the needs of your plants is so important.

There are pros and cons to everything, and before you decide if you want to use fertilizer or not, you may want to list these out. Fertilizer will help your plants grow faster and add additional nutrients to your soil. It will also help eliminate certain soil deficiencies and provide macro- and micro-nutrients. However, in addition to these positives, there are negative things to consider when it comes to using fertilizer. When you use fertilizer, you can add too many nutrients to the soil. It isn't good for the environment, causes pollution, and can even contaminate groundwater. Fertilizer also tends to be more expensive than compost, and in addition to being harmful to the environment, they are just as bad for the human body.

If you decide to use fertilizer, you will want to make sure you are getting one that is safe for your plants. All-purpose granulating fertilizer is a good start. It has everything your plants need to help them grow and thrive and is well balanced. There is also a blend of microorganisms in the fertilizer that help to improve soil quality. Liquid fertilizers can be excellent, too, because they can penetrate the soil immediately to be absorbed by the plants. These fertilizers don't last as long as others, and they come in more concentrated forms that can be diluted with water. The health of your garden is essential, and you want to ensure your plants are getting everything they need to thrive. This is why knowing how to nourish your garden is necessary.

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## Chapter 8: Nourishing Your Garden

A lot goes into nourishing your garden and ensuring your plants are getting all they need to provide you with beautiful fruits and vegetables. We've already talked about the soil you will want to use and whether you should decide on fertilizer or compost, and we've even discussed how you wish your garden to be set up.

Now that we have all that figured out, it is time to talk about other aspects essential to proper plant care, including air, light, and water. Without air, light, and water, plants can't survive. They need them, and without them, your plants will get stressed out and may even die. In this chapter, we will discuss why all these things are so important, along with what you can do to ensure your crops are happy.

### Air

Air is essential when it comes to growing just about anything. If you want your garden to be healthy, proper air circulation is necessary. Not having adequate circulation, especially for indoor plants, is one of the fastest ways to kill your plants. Air circulation for your plants is vital because it helps promote evaporation and prevents condensation on leaves. It also reduces the risk of fungal infection and rot and helps your plant's limbs to grow stronger. There are different types of air, and some of them are good for your plants, and some of them may have some adverse effects as well.

Damp air is an excellent example of this because when the air is moist, your garden will stay wet for longer. When your plants remain damp for too long, they are prone to suffering from things such as fungal diseases. Even worse is if there is water on the leaves of your plant, this will assist in transmitting spores from one plant to the other, spreading disease around to all of them. This can be devastating for your garden and is exactly why you need to be careful and pay close attention to the airflow your plants are

getting. Damp soil will also attract many insects that you may not want around your plants. They make a home for themselves right in your garden, and they will eat and destroy your plants.

This is why air needs to flow freely around your plants. When you allow for this, you are less likely to have damp airflow, and your plants will fare much better. Now you may be wondering how you are supposed to supply good airflow to your garden. You will want to see your plants gently swaying in the wind as the breeze passes through them. If you ensure your garden is getting a good amount of sun, this will also help with the airflow. When you are planting your garden, you will want to consider all these things. The placement of your garden is critical, and airflow is something you will want to consider when seeing up. Things like nearby buildings or hedges can impact airflow, so bear this in mind.

When growing your plants indoors, there are even more things you will want to consider. Indoor plants need more airflow than outdoor plants because the climate indoors is different. If you choose to keep your plants near a window, they may be getting all the air circulation they will need, as even if the window is closed, the changes in temperature that occur naturally throughout the day will create a slight breeze. If you are still worried about proper air circulation, the best way to ensure your plants are getting it is to use a fan. You don't want to blow it directly at your plants as this can dry them out, and it just needs to be able to push air through the room. Airflow is crucial to your plant's survival and is something you will want to keep a close eye on.

## **Water**

If there's magic anywhere on the planet, it's in water. It is an essential part of life; without it, life would cease to exist. Watering your plants is vital as water keeps them healthy and happy. However, the way you water your plants can make a difference. You want to maintain good moisture levels in your soil as most plants depend on this. Some plants can benefit from a slight drying out every now and then as this can help promote root growth.

You don't necessarily want to water your plants very often, but when it does come time to water them, you will need to ensure you are thorough.

You also want to pay attention to the time of day you are watering your plants. It is essential to try and do it early in the morning or in the evening because when you water your plants when the soil is hot, it is more likely to evaporate, and your plants won't be getting all the water they need. This also gives your plants the chance to absorb all the water they need before the heat returns. Keep in mind that you want the leaves of your plants dry. If you leave them wet, then this can cause disease and rot. You are also more likely to burn and damage your plants if the leaves are wet when the sun is shining on them.

One of the most critical parts of watering your plants is ensuring that all the water reaches the roots of your plants. Your roots will absorb the water and feed it to the rest of the plants, so if you aren't getting enough water to the roots, the plant may dry out. Always be sure to water all around your plants as well and not just in one spot. If your water is in just one place, you will end up with uneven root growth, and your plants will be unable to properly absorb nutrients. You always want to ensure your plants are getting enough water, but you also want to be sure to water them as little as possible.

If you water your plants well, there is no need to water them daily; once or twice a week should suffice. Always take extra care to ensure the soil for your plants can drain because if it doesn't, then your plants' roots are likely to get waterlogged, leading to rot. For the best water retention that isn't going to drown your plants, it is a good idea to use something rich in clay as this will evenly store the water and help prevent waterlogging.

When watering new plants, things can be a little challenging. Watering them takes care, and you want to ensure they are getting enough but not too much. New plants should be watered right at the base, and they should be watered right away when you plant them. If you are watering your plants with a garden hose, be careful not to blast the base of your plant with water as this can disrupt the soil, and as a result, your plants cannot soak up the water, and it simply goes to waste. The first week after watering your plants, you should water them daily with a slow flow of water for 15 to 20 minutes.

During the second week, you can start watering your plants every other day for about the same amount of time. Once you get to the third week, you can begin watering your plants two to three times per week. Your watering habits should always be adjusted to the weather in your area. If you are getting a lot of rain, you will want to water your plants less, but if it has been hot and you've been getting a lot of sun, then you may want to try and water them more often.

If you are growing plants in containers, you may want to water these every day or every other day at the least. If you are not sure your plants need watering, you can always test them by sticking your finger in the soil. If the soil is damp, watering isn't necessary, but if it is dry, water it. Once your plants are established, usually after the first growing season, they will be able to get water on their own, and you will only need to water them when they show signs of needing water.

The seasons will also affect how you water your plants because there are significant temperature changes throughout the year depending on the season.

Watering crops in the early spring can be challenging, but your plants won't do well without the proper amount of water. If you don't supply your plants with enough water, they will not grow, and if they don't grow, you will have nothing to harvest. Before you set up your garden, it is always a good idea to check the current moisture levels in the ground. Do this by digging a small hole between two to four inches in depth and form a small ball with the soil. If it falls apart and crumbles, this soil is dry and needs to be watered. The specific type of soil you are using for your garden is also going to have an impact on moisture levels, so bear this in mind as well.

When you water your garden in the early spring, you want to make sure you are using cool water and that you are watering in the early morning or late evening. This is also true for watering in the summer as it tends to be a lot warmer in the summer, and it is never a good idea to water your plants in the heat. Using hot water isn't good for the plants because it could scald them, and when you water during the day when there is too much sunlight, the water evaporates before your plants get the chance to absorb it. You



should water to a depth of between six to eight inches to ensure the roots of your plants get all the water they need.

Something you may be concerned about when watering your garden is the amount of water you are using. It can take quite a bit of water to ensure your garden is getting everything it needs, but you still want to conserve as much as possible. Drip irrigation is a great way to ensure your plants are getting the proper amount of water while still making sure you use as little water as possible. It works by applying water to the ground in slow drops to ensure it can soak into the ground without sitting on top of the soil. When water sits on top of the soil, it's more likely to evaporate before reaching your plant's roots. You will need to space your plants far enough apart to ensure even watering amongst them. It is also possible to use a mulch or compost cover over your garden to help keep the soil moist.

## **Light**

Plants require light to thrive, and without it, they will not survive. As important as it is to ensure your plants are watered and getting enough airflow, you also need to ensure they are getting the right amount of light. Different plants have different light requirements, so knowing what you're growing is crucial. We all know the importance of sunlight and the process of photosynthesis, which is the transformation and use of light energy to turn water into carbon dioxide and other elements into oxygen and other compounds. While available in abundance and for free, it sometimes can be challenging to ensure proper exposure to sunlight in plants. Too little light is bound to stress out your plants, and the same can be said for too much sunlight. There is a balance that you need to find and sometimes, getting there takes a bit of effort.

The good news is that most plants already come with their lighting requirements on the label, giving you an idea of how much sunlight your plants will need. It may take a bit of trial and error to reach the proper lighting requirements, but the instructions should help lead you in the right direction. If you are growing indoors, it can become a little harder to meet the lighting requirements for your plants, so this is something you will

really want to keep in mind when it comes to where you intend to place them.

There are three different types of light when growing your plants indoors—bright light, indirect light, and low light:

1. Bright light is when you have your plants next to a south- or west-facing window so that your plants may receive sunlight all day long. Plants with bright- light requirements need at least six to eight hours of sunlight per day and sometimes even more. It is also important not to place your plants too close to the window as they may not be able to handle the breeze that comes through, especially in the winter. Plants don't like sudden temperature changes, which can stress them out.
2. Indirect light is when you place your plants near an east-facing window or a room that isn't right next to a south-facing window but still receives some light from it. It is also possible to place your plant next to the window with a screen cover, so the light isn't too intense. Too much harsh sunlight isn't good for your plants and may even cause them to burn or develop brown spots on their leaves.
3. Low-light plants can be grown in many different rooms throughout your house as they don't have as many light requirements as bright-light and indirect-light plants.

Insufficient or improper exposure to sunlight is one of the significant challenges in container gardening. Hence, it would be wise to invest in some lighting equipment to nourish your plants with the required light. Here are a few options for you to consider:

- **LED Lights:** These are the most common type of grow lights with highly efficient bulbs that supply bright light without burning too hot and creating a bunch of unwanted heat. When Growing plants, temperature matters, so you don't want lights that will raise the temperature and make your plants uncomfortable. There are many different types of LED lights for you to choose from, depending on your needs. Some have screw-in replacement bulbs, and others are a little more complex. There are even bright LED lights available for use in greenhouses and as desktop fixtures. Some LED products even

allow you to set a timer for the lights to ensure your plants are always getting the ideal amount of light.

- **Incandescent Lights:** These are great if you are growing low-light plants as they cannot provide the proper amount of light to bright-light or indirect-light plants. These lights also tend to run a bit hot, and because of this, they aren't great for growing plants with high-light requirements.
- **Fluorescent Lights:** These lights are great for starting vegetables indoors as they work excellent for plants with low- to medium-light requirements. These lights typically come in large tube bulbs with sizes T5, T8, and T12. If you have a narrow bulb, it is likely to be brighter. These lights also use up to 75% less energy than incandescent lights.
- **Compact Fluorescent Lights:** If you don't have room for the standard T5 system and are growing indoors, these lights are a great alternative. These come in several different wattages, so you will want to ensure you are getting the right light for your plants.
- **Halide Lights:** This type of light is typically used for larger plants as they can cover a greater distance in light. These are also great for covering large areas with a good amount of light.

When using lights to start seeds, you must meet all their requirements. While plants require quite a bit of light, you must also give them a dark period. If you keep your plants under constant light, this will stress them out, and they will not flourish. When starting seeds, you will want to ensure they are getting at least 14 hours of light exposure. You will also need to keep your lights clean as this will ensure your plants are getting everything they need in terms of light. When the lights are dirty, it is more difficult for them to produce the proper amount of light.

Lights produce the most light from the center of the bulb; because of this, it is an excellent idea to rotate your seedlings regularly. This will ensure that all parts of your plants get equal amounts of light. If you want to make your lights more effective, you can also brighten them by placing reflective surfaces near them to mirror the light back to the plants. This will increase the amount of light absorbed by the plants and even help them grow faster.

Air, water, and light are three things that are essential to the health of your plants, and without these three things, your plants won't have the opportunity to thrive. When you ensure all these requirements are met, you will be rewarded with happy and healthy plants.

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## **Chapter 9: Populating Your Garden**

Populating your garden is one of the best parts of gardening. You get the chance to figure out what you want to grow and what you want your garden to look like. You need to choose the suitable vegetables you will grow when starting your garden, especially if you plan on having your garden supply most, if not all, of your food. You want the food you grow to thrive, but you also want it to provide you with everything you need. This is why you will need to start thinking about how much you plan to grow. Keep an eye on the time of year, and be sure to start early in the season so you can make the most out of all your plants.

### **Direct-Seeded in the Garden**

When the time comes to get started with your garden, you have the option to either use seeds or seedlings. Seeds tend to be much cheaper than seedlings, but they take much longer to get started. When you are trying to determine which would be the best for you to use, there are some things to consider. Planting seeds is called direct seeding, and there are a few things you will want to keep in mind when using this method. Is the vegetable easy to germinate if you grow it from seed? How long is the growing season? Seeds take a bit longer to get started, so if the growing season is short, this may not be the best option. You need to be sure the plant will have time to reach maturity by the end of the season, which isn't always possible. Are you going to need to take extra special care of the seed to get it to grow? What about a vegetable? Is it easy to transplant or will it take a bit more work?

When answering these questions, it will help give you an idea of how you want to start your garden. If you have a long growing season, starting your vegetables from seeds may be your preferred method. It depends on how long you have to give the seed the chance to grow. You want your plants to reach maturity so they can supply you with vegetables, but that can't

happen if you don't give them enough time to get there. Sometimes, it is best to try and get your seeds started indoors. Plants such as peppers, tomatoes, and eggplants are very prone to fungi and aren't likely to do well if you try to plant their seeds directly into the ground. When you start them indoors, you have better control over their environment, and you can ensure they are getting the care they need to thrive.

You want to ensure the soil for these plants is warm and that you are supplying them with a sufficient amount of light. These things are easily achievable when growing indoors and can help your seeds reach their full potential. When you buy seeds, the packet they come in is usually packed with tons of helpful information that you will want to pay close attention to. Most packets will tell you everything you need to know when getting started, such as how long it should take the plant to reach maturity. The plant won't supply you with any vegetables until after it has reached maturity, so this is something to pay close attention to. Seed packets will also give you information about when you should plant them, depending on the last frost. Some seed packets will even recommend that you start your seeds indoors.

Some vegetables, such as root vegetables, don't do well when transplanted, so direct seeding is the best way to plant them. Some examples of these vegetables include:

- Carrots
- Beans
- Beets
- Corn
- Cucumbers
- Garlic
- Lettuce
- Okra
- Muskmelons
- Parsnips
- Peas
- Pumpkins
- Rutabagas



- Radishes
- Salsify (oyster roots)
- Squashes
- Watermelons
- Turnips
- Zucchini

## **Transplanted as Seedlings**

Some plants don't do very well when planted directly into the ground and instead should be transplanted as seedlings. This will put less stress on your plants and ensure they stay healthy as they grow. It is best to start vegetables that take a while to grow as seedlings because otherwise, you risk them being unable to reach maturity by the end of the season. Here are some of the vegetables that are best started as seedlings.

- Artichoke
- Basil
- Broccoli
- Brussel Sprouts
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Chard
- Chives
- Collard Greens
- Eggplant
- Endive
- Escarole
- Kale
- Kohlrabi
- Leeks
- Mustard
- Parsley
- Peppers

- Tomatoes

## **Roots or Bulbs**

Some vegetables don't start from either seeds or seedlings, and they are grown from roots or bulbs. Here are some examples of these vegetables, along with how they are grown:

- Asparagus: Seed but typically grown from one-year-old roots
- Shallots and Garlic: Cloves
- Horseradish: Root cuttings
- Onions: Seeds but typically grown from sets
- Potatoes: Seed potatoes/Divisions
- Rhubarb: Root crowns
- Sweet Potatoes: Slips

Regardless of how you decide you want to start your crops, this is something you will want to have planned out ahead of time. It takes time for plants to grow and reach maturity and the more you have figured out before you start, the better.



## Best 10 Vegetables for a Beginner Survival Garden

When getting started with your survival garden, a few vegetables will get you everything you need without being too challenging to grow. It is essential to know what you want to grow before getting started because you want ample time to get your crops started. Setting up your garden takes time and work, but it is worth it. The following 10 plants are all vegetables that are perfect for creating your survival garden:

- **Beans (*Phaseolus Vulgaris*):** These are either pole beans or bush beans, and while most are green, there are also variations of purple, red, streaked, and yellow beans. They usually grow to be several inches long and round or flattened in shape. Beans typically do best when planted in spring and grow quickly, and flowers appear on them about two months after planting. However, their harvest time can vary greatly depending on the beans you are growing. It is crucial to remember that the seeds of these plants can be poisonous to humans and animals when not cooked.

- **General Information**
  - **Family:** Fabaceae
  - **Plant Type:** Annual, Vegetable
  - **Size:** 2-15 ft. tall, 2-3 ft. wide (can vary depending on type)
- **Growing Conditions**
  - **Sun Exposure:** Full
  - **Soil Type:** Moist, loamy, and well-drained
  - **Soil PH:** Acidic (6.0-6.2)
  - **Bloom Time:** Spring but can also be grown in summer
  - **Hardiness Zone:** 2-11 (USDA)
  - **Native Areas:** Central America, South America
- **Others**
  - **Toxicity:** Beans can be toxic to pets and humans when raw, so this is something you will need to keep in mind when growing.
  - **How and When to Plant:** You don't want to start beans too early, and you will need to ensure that wherever you plant them has ample sunlight. Watch out for shade, as you don't want them to be shaded. You want to plant seeds about an inch deep, with each seed placed three to four feet apart.
  - **Care Harvest and Storage Tips:** You will want to harvest your beans when the pods are full and they have reached a relatively large size. Once the shape of the beans is visible through the pods, they begin to die out. When harvesting these plants, you will want to take extra care so as not to cause any damage and prevent new pods from forming.
- **Carrots (Daucus Carota):** Carrots are biennial, meaning they are typically harvested every other year. However, they can usually be harvested within their first year before the winter. They have fern-like

leaves, and their flowers have five petals and sepals. Carrot roots are typically one inch in diameter and can grow from one up to 12 inches long. Most carrots are known for having orange roots, but they can come in a variety of other colors as well.

- **General Information**

- **Family:** Apiaceae or Umbelliferae
- **Plant Type:** Vegetable
- **Size:** 6-12-inch root, 1 foot in height, and 9 inch spread

- **Growing Conditions**

- **Sun Exposure:** Full to part shade
- **Soil Type:** Loose, well-draining soil
- **Soil PH:** Slightly acidic (6.0-6.8)
- **Bloom Time:** Spring of second growing season
- **Hardiness Zone:** 3-10
- **Native Area:** Southeast Asia, Europe

- **Others**

- **Toxicity:** None
- **How and When to Plant:** Carrots do best when planted in cool weather. They can be planted as soon as the ground is ready for them in the early spring or two or three weeks before the last frost. If you live somewhere warmer, you may want to try planting them in the fall through the winter. You will want to place them somewhere that gets at least eight hours of sun a day and doesn't have too much shade. Seeds should be planted  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch beneath the soil and spread at least two or three inches apart.
- **Care Harvest and Storage Tips:** Keep in mind that you won't be able to check your carrots and see how they are doing until time to harvest. You can usually harvest them anywhere from 50 to 75 days after you plant them from

seed. The best way to test your carrots is to taste them. If they are sweet, they are ready; if not, they will still need a little more time. To store them, cut ½ an inch off the top, scrub them clean using cold water, and let them air dry. Carrots can then be stored in the refrigerator in airtight plastic bags. Carrots can also be stored in sand or dry sawdust as long as these are cool and dry areas.

- **Lettuce (*Lactuca Sativa*):** Lettuce is best grown during cool seasons such as the spring or fall. It is easy to sow as all it takes is for you to put the seed into the ground. Lettuce grows quickly, so you will want to only plant a small number of seeds at a time. They are also able to produce for a long time and are easy to take care of.

- **General Information**

- **Family:** Asteraceae
- **Plant Type:** Cool Season Vegetable
- **Size:** Leaves are 6-8 inches in length and width

- **Growing Conditions**

- **Sun Exposure:** Full sun
- **Soil Type:** Loose and well-draining
- **Soil PH:** Neutral (6.0-8.0)
- **Bloom Time:** Summer
- **Hardiness Zone:** 2-11 (USDA)
- **Native Area:** Mediterranean

- **Others**

- **Toxicity:** The sap can cause mild skin irritation.
- **How and When to Plant:** Lettuce does best when grown in the spring and fall as it is a cool-weather plant. When planting in the spring, you can start your seeds inside about six to eight weeks before the last frost. If you plan to plant them in the fall, you will want to plant them three

months before the first frost. You will want to plant your lettuce seeds about ¼ inch into the ground but keep in mind that different types of lettuce will require different spacing. With head lettuce, you will typically want about 10 inches of space between plants, while for leaf lettuce, you can place them about six to eight inches apart.

- **Care Harvest and Storage Tips:** The leaves of lettuce can be harvested by removing them individually if you are hoping for a continuous harvest, or you can simply cut the whole plant right above the surface soil. Once you have harvested your lettuce, you will need to wash it thoroughly. To do this, place it under lukewarm water for about 30 seconds. You will then want to change to cold water to remove the rest of the dirt. If you aren't planning to eat it right away, hold off washing it. To store it, remove all excess moisture and place it in a plastic bag in the fridge.
- **Peas (*Pisum Sativum*):** Peas are easy to grow but don't have a long growing period. You will want to plant them early in the spring, so they have a chance to reach maturity before it gets too hot. They are best grown in the fall and winter seasons in warmer areas.
  - **General Information**
    - **Family:** Legumes
    - **Plant Type:** Fabaceae
    - **Size:** Up to 6 feet in length with pods 4 inches long
  - **Growing Conditions**
    - **Sun Exposure:** Full sun
    - **Soil Type:** Well-draining with sand or clay
    - **Soil PH:** 6.0-7.5
    - **Bloom Time:** Spring
    - **Hardiness Zone:** 2-11



- **Native Area:** Eastern Mediterranean
- **Others**
  - **Toxicity:** Mild; seeds of sweet peas are poisonous, containing lathyragens
  - **How and When to Plant:** 6-8 weeks before the last frost
  - **Care Harvest and Storage Tips:** Peas mature quickly once they bloom, so keep a close eye on them once you see flowers. You want to harvest them in the morning. The more you harvest, the more the plant will produce. Always use two hands when harvesting peas by using one hand to hold the stem and the other to pull the pod free.
- **Potatoes (*Solanum Tuberosum*):** The time of year to grow potatoes will depend a lot on the climate in your area. They are cool-weather crops, so if you have harsh summers, you will want to start them at the very end of summer when the weather becomes cooler. Potatoes generally take a very long time to grow, so you will want to ensure you are planting them as early as possible.
  - **General Information**
    - **Family:** Nightshade (Solanaceae)
    - **Plant Type:** Vegetable
    - **Size:** Up to 20 inches in height
  - **Growing Conditions**
    - **Sun Exposure:** Partial sun
    - **Soil Type:** Well-drained and sandy
    - **Soil PH:** 6.0-6.5
    - **Bloom Time:** Spring or fall
    - **Hardiness Zone:** 3-10
    - **Native Area:** South America
  - **Others**

- **Toxicity:** None
  - **How and When to Plant:** 2-3 weeks before last frost date
  - **Care Harvest and Storage Tips:** Harvest your potatoes when the weather is cool and the foliage on your plants has wholly died out. You then want to dig up the roots, being careful not to damage the potatoes. Once you've harvested them, allow them to air dry and then leave them in a cool, dry place for approximately two weeks to cure them. You can store them the same way, and they will last for up to six months.
- **Sunflowers (*Helianthus Annuus*):** Sunflowers have high sun requirements to grow properly and prefer warmer weather. They also require a lot of nutrients, so you will need to ensure you are using nutrient-rich soil and that you are planting them somewhere that isn't going to flood when it rains. They also don't like high winds, so growing them somewhere that offers protection, such as by your fence, is a good idea.
  - **General Information**
    - **Family:** Asteraceae
    - **Plant Type:** Flower
    - **Size:** 3-15 feet tall with leaves 3-12 inches long
  - **Growing Conditions**
    - **Sun Exposure:** Full sun
    - **Soil Type:** Loose, well-draining
    - **Soil PH:** 6.0-7.5
    - **Bloom Time:** Summer into the fall
    - **Hardiness Zone:** 4-9
    - **Native Area:** North and South America
  - **Others**

- **Toxicity:** Mild; leaves and flowers cause slight skin irritation
  - **How and When to Plant:** After the last frost has passed and the weather has started to become warmer
  - **Care Harvest and Storage Tips:** For flowers, you want to cut the stems in the morning, and doing so later in the day is likely to cause your flowers to wilt. For seeds, leave the flower out to dry and once it is dry, cut the head off the plant and place it in a container. To remove seeds, simply pull them off the plant.
- **Zucchini (Cucurbita Pepo):** Zucchini is a warm weather plant, so you will want to wait until the soil is warm before planting. They need a lot of sun, so you will want to be sure you plant them somewhere where there is plenty of access to unobstructed sunlight.
  - **General Information**
    - **Family:** Cucurbitaceae
    - **Plant Type:** Vegetable
    - **Size:** 2.0-3.5 feet tall and 1-4 feet wide
  - **Growing Conditions**
    - **Sun Exposure:** Full
    - **Soil Type:** Fertile well-drained soil that contains organic matter
    - **Soil PH:** 6.0-7.5
    - **Bloom Time:** Summer
    - **Hardiness Zone:** 3-9
    - **Native Area:** Mexico and Central America
  - **Others**
    - **Toxicity:** Mild. Very unlikely chance of cucurbitacin poisoning

- **How and When to Plant:** Start once outside temperatures reach at least 70 degrees and your soil is at least 60°F
  - **Care Harvest and Storage Tips:** Once your zucchini reaches between five and eight inches, it is time to harvest. You will want to use something sharp such as a set of pruners, to carefully cut the zucchini from the rest of the plant. Be sure to leave at least two inches of the stem behind. Store your zucchini in your fridge inside of a plastic bag.
- **Garlic (*Allium Sativum*):** Garlic doesn't take up much space and is easy to grow and harvest. While it is easy to grow, it does take time and will require refrigeration for a few weeks once harvested to give the cloves time to develop into bulbs.
  - **General Information**
    - **Family:** Amaryllidaceae
    - **Plant Type:** Bulb/Vegetable
    - **Size:** 18- 4 inches tall
  - **Growing Conditions**
    - **Sun Exposure:** Full
    - **Soil Type:** Well-draining
    - **Soil PH:** 6.8-7.5
    - **Bloom Time:** Early summer to fall
    - **Hardiness Zone:** 1-5
    - **Native Area:** Central Asia
  - **Others**
    - **Toxicity:** Toxic to pets
    - **How and When to Plant:** 6-8 weeks before the first frost date in the fall

- **Care Harvest and Storage Tips:** Very carefully dig the garlic out of the ground when it comes time to harvest. Take care not to damage the roots and carefully lift the plant off the ground before removing any excess dirt. Once you've harvested your garlic, you will need to let it cure in a cool, dry place for at least two weeks.
- **Onions (*Allium Cepa*):** Onions do best when planted in the spring. If you have pets, you will want to keep in mind that onions are poisonous to them, so where you choose to grow them is crucial.
  - **General Information**
    - **Family:** Amaryllidaceae
    - **Plant Type:** Vegetable
    - **Size:** 12-18 inches tall and 6-12 inches wide
  - **Growing Conditions**
    - **Sun Exposure:** Full sun
    - **Soil Type:** Loamy, well-draining
    - **Soil PH:** 6-7
    - **Bloom Time:** Summer
    - **Hardiness Zone:** 5-10
    - **Native Area:** Asia
  - **Others**
    - **Toxicity:** Poisonous to cats and dogs
    - **How and When to Plant:** Onions should be planted in the spring once the ground has thawed out and the soil is around 50% Fahrenheit. Space seeds approximately four inches apart to allow room to grow.
    - **Care Harvest and Storage Tips:** Onions can be harvested at any stage but are not fully mature until half of the leaves on top of the plant have collapsed. Once you

harvest your onions, store them in a cool, dry area, away from any direct sunlight.

- **Cabbage (Brassica Oleracea):** Cabbage is a cool-weather plant and is great for almost any garden. It is capable of surviving light frosts, and it is easy to grow. They typically do their best in the spring and fall. The best time to plant is right at the beginning of spring or the end of the summer when the weather starts to cool down.
  - **General Information**
    - **Family:** Brassicaceae
    - **Plant Type:** Vegetable
    - **Size:** 10-30 inches tall and 4-24 inches wide
  - **Growing Conditions**
    - **Sun Exposure:** Full Sun
    - **Soil Type:** Well-drained but also water retentive
    - **Soil PH:** 6.0-7.0
    - **Bloom Time:** Spring and fall
    - **Hardiness Zone:** 1-10
    - **Native Area:** Southwestern Asia
  - **Others**
    - **Toxicity:** Toxic to pets
    - **How and When to Plant:** 6-8 weeks before last spring frost
    - **Care Harvest and Storage Tips:** To harvest your cabbage, cut the head off the rest of the plant and put it somewhere cool right away to prevent it from wilting. Once you've done this, you will want to pull the rest of the plant out of the ground. You can store cabbage in your refrigerator for up to two months.

When you are trying to start a survival garden, you are going to want to grow as much as possible without overwhelming yourself. It isn't easy to supply yourself with all your own food, and sometimes starting small is the best way to go until you can get the hang of things. Your garden needs to be able to provide you and your family with everything you need to survive, which can take some getting used to. More likely than not, creating a thriving survival garden will take more than one season and maybe even over a year. There is a lot of trial and error in gardening, and until you know what works best for you, it is good to start small. The following are vegetables that are easy and fast to grow.

- **Arugula:** This vegetable grows fast and has shallow roots, making it easy to grow in a container. Arugula takes about three to four weeks to grow; the sooner you harvest them, the better they taste. Arugula requires full to partial sun and requires humus-rich and well-draining soil.
- **Bok Choy:** This is another very fast-growing plant that is great for when you are just starting out. You will want to plant bok choy in somewhere with partial sunlight, and be sure you are watering it regularly. You also want to ensure you are growing your bok choy in rich, well-draining soil.
- **Broccoli Rabe:** This vegetable takes about 50-60 days to grow. Once it is ready to harvest, you want to harvest them immediately. The earlier you harvest them, the better they will taste. This plant requires full sun with nutrient-rich soil and a neutral PH.
- **Cress:** This plant is great because it can grow year-round and often in the winter. These do well when grown on a shallow tray lined with wet paper towels. You will want to harvest them once they are about two inches in size. Cress requires full to partial sun and does not need soil to grow.
- **Kale:** What makes kale so great to grow is its fantastic ability to withstand cold temperatures. In some places, kale can even be grown year-round. However, it tends to grow a bit slower in the spring than in the summer and fall. Be sure to water your kale often because, without enough water, it will become bitter. Once the leaves are large

enough, harvest them from outside the plant. Kale requires full to partial sun and loamy soil.

- **Mustard Greens:** You want to ensure you water these plants well as they will not taste very good if they have the chance to dry out. These plants are susceptible to high heat and do best in the spring and fall. You can harvest these as soon as you see the leaves are big enough. Growing these plants requires full to partial sun and soil that is sandy with clay and well-draining.
- **Radishes:** These are one of the fastest-growing vegetables and can be ready to harvest after just three weeks! It is best to start them outdoors because of how quickly they grow. They require full sun and loamy, sandy soil.
- **Spinach:** This vegetable is a cool-weather plant that does reasonably well in the cold. Spinach needs full sun or partial shade and is usually ready to harvest within four to six weeks. When harvesting, you want to cut off the outside leaves first, as this plant can be harvested more than once. You want to grow spinach in loamy soil with a neutral PH.
- **Turnips:** These make a great vegetable to grow at home because they are easy to grow, are resistant to most temperatures, and can be planted just about any time of year across multiple growing areas. The leaves and the roots of this plant can also be eaten. They require full sun to grow and slightly acidic loamy and sandy soil.





## **Chapter 10: Storing Your Bounty**

Obviously, knowing how and where to store your harvest is crucial information, especially when you are planning to grow all your own food. When you harvest your crops, you want them to last a little while, but that isn't possible if you don't know how to store them. You need your food to last through the winter months when there aren't many things you will be able to grow. Thankfully, there are many excellent ways to keep your food fresh until you are ready to eat it.

### **Storing Your Produce for Later Use**

Where you store your crops is one of the most important things to consider when starting your own survival garden because if your food doesn't last very long, then you won't be able to sufficiently supply yourself and your family with food. During the winter, it is difficult to grow most crops, and because of this, you must have food you can store for the winter.

When it comes time to harvest your crops, you should already have space set aside to keep them, as this is something you will want to plan for. You should also remember that the less you handle your freshly harvested crops, the longer they will last. When you handle them too much, this can cause bruising to the vegetable causing it to go bad much faster.

One of the main things for you to keep an eye on when it comes to storing your crops is the temperature. If you don't store your vegetables in the right temperature environment, then they are likely to rot much faster. The temperature you want to store your food will depend entirely on what you have grown, as different vegetables have different needs for temperature and storage.

Humidity is also crucial when it comes to properly storing your food. You want to ensure you have the right location already set up before you even

harvest your plants because you will need to get them into storage right away once they are ready to ensure they will last as long as possible.

There are a few different ways to store your food, depending on what you are growing. Basements, refrigerators, and root cellars usually work perfectly for storing food because they either keep your food dark and dry, or if you have vegetables to put in the fridge, it will keep them cool and prevent them from rotting.

Basements work great because they tend to be dry and cool, which is exactly what you need for certain things such as potatoes and onions. When you harvest your vegetables, they are still alive, which means they still require oxygen. They will rot quickly if you keep them somewhere without proper oxygen. You will also want to keep an eye out for invasive animals or bugs such as rats or flies, as they will eat your food and damage your storage. Not only this, but it is also possible for them to spread disease and potentially even contaminate all your food supply. Always be sure to inspect all your vegetables carefully before storing them.

When storing your vegetables in a cellar or basement, you never want to place your product on the floor as this could cause mildew to form. You want your food raised off the ground on a shelf or hanging from a rack. Keeping the room dark is also key to ensuring your food lasts as long as possible. Exposing them to light reduces the quality of the vegetables, causing them to spoil faster. If you notice any of your food vegetables beginning to spoil, you need to be sure to remove them immediately. When food spoils, it emits a gas that causes all the other food around it to spoil. Watching the quality of your food is key to keeping it safe to eat.

If you have vegetables in cold storage, they will not last as long, so you will want to ensure you are using those first. While keeping them cold will extend their life, it won't be enough to keep them fresh for long periods. When you have something like cabbage, it is crucial to put it in a plastic bag. Don't put it directly in the fridge with no protection as this will cause it to spoil faster.

With onions and garlic, you want to give these at least two weeks to dry out before storing them, and when it does come time to store them, you will need to keep them somewhere that is cool and dry. If you are also growing

potatoes, be sure to store them away from your onions. If you leave your onions where they have access to light or if they are not thoroughly dried out, they are likely to spoil much faster. Potatoes are similar in this sense, and you want to ensure you are giving them time to dry out before storing them. You will know when potatoes are ready to store when the skin no longer peels off when you rub your fingers over it.

Storing root vegetables can be difficult sometimes as they tend to shrivel up when not correctly stored because they start to lose moisture. To prevent this, you can place your vegetables in a plastic bag filled with moist sphagnum moss. Carrots are safe to leave in the ground for the duration of the winter, and doing this can even improve their taste. For pumpkins and winter squash, you will need to cure them somewhere dry and well ventilated for about two weeks. Once you've finished curing them, you will want to move them somewhere cool and dark to store them.



## ***Food Preservation Methods***

When it comes to storing your food, not all of the food will last as long as you want it to. Fresh food doesn't have the best shelf life, but the good news is that there are ways to help keep your food fresh a little longer. One preservation method is known as dehydrating, which is exactly what it sounds like. Dried foods are great, and they last longer than they would otherwise. They are lightweight and easy to store. Many foods can be dehydrated, including strawberries, apples, pears, potatoes, green beans, and many others. If you are looking into this preservation method, there are a few different ways you can do it. You can simply use your oven, depending on your needs.

If you are looking to dehydrate many of your crops, you may want to invest in a commercial dehydrator. Otherwise, heating your oven to around 140°F should work just fine. It is possible to dry out your crops at room temperature, but the conditions must be perfect for this to happen, including proper airflow and the right humidity. If there is a lot of humidity in your area, then this most likely isn't the best method for you to use. You want the air to be reasonably dry for your crops to dry out properly.

Your produce will dry better if you slice all of them before dehydrating, and you may also want to peel off the skin. Though this is not something you have to do, the skin can make it more difficult to remove the moisture. If you decide to slice before dehydrating, you will want to make sure you have even slices, so they all dehydrate at the same pace. If you are using a commercial dehydrator, you will want to make sure you have it preheated before getting started because you will want to put your product in right away once you are done slicing. You don't want to have your heat too high when dehydrating, as it will cause the outside to harden while trapping moisture inside. If this happens, it will cause your food to spoil faster. Keep in mind that when you dehydrate food, it will shrink, so if you are working with smaller pieces, it is also a good idea to use a mesh.

Canning is another great way to help you preserve your food and have it last for as long as possible. It works by placing the food you want to preserve in jars, and then the jar is heated to kill all the microorganisms and break down the enzymes. As the jar is heated and cooled, this creates a seal preventing any unwanted air from getting inside.

Before getting started with canning, you need to ensure everything you will be using is clean and sanitized to prevent spreading bacteria. If you are planning to can a lot of your fruits and vegetables, you will need to ensure you have plenty of jars. Not having enough jars could lead to you being unable to preserve all your food.

Once your jars are clean and you have all your fruits and vegetables ready, you will want to inspect your jars and ensure there are no cracks anywhere on them. Before you start canning, you will need to wash all your produce thoroughly with cold water. You will want to peel any food with thick skin before placing it in cans.

Salting is great to try out during the cold months as a way to preserve your food. It is similar to dehydration because it works to pull all the water out of the product. Salt will help keep your vegetables from becoming covered in bacteria, which will help keep them from spoiling as fast.

Another fantastic method you can use when trying to preserve your crops is the pickling method. What makes this method great is all you need is water and acid. Pickling also helps kill any harmful bacteria in addition to creating probiotics. Pickling also helps lock in many of the vitamins and minerals in your crops, keeping them tasting great for even longer.

Freezing is perhaps one of the most common methods used for preserving food. It is easy to do and will keep your products fresh for longer. This method works best for products harvested when they are fully ripe. Once you get them frozen, fruit can last for up to a year, while vegetables can last a year and a half. This is a long time, which makes this method great if you plan to grow a lot of food.

When the winter comes, it can be stressful knowing you cannot grow crops anymore. Even if you want to, with the ground being frozen and the cold air, some people just won't take to it.

Vegetables typically need somewhere cool and dry to maintain their freshness, while fruit likes to be canned or frozen. You will need to ensure that wherever you are storing your crops has good ventilation because if it doesn't, this could cause your plants to spoil fast. It is also necessary to check your plants every few days to ensure they are all still fresh and none

of them are contaminated. Storing your crops correctly is essential, primarily if you rely on them as your only food source. If you don't take care of your crops, they won't be able to take care of you.

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## **Chapter 11: Protecting Your Plants**

Ensuring the safety of your plants should always be one of your first priorities when it comes to growing a survival garden. Your plants are the thing that will supply you with food, and when you don't take care of them, they can't do that. There are many ways for your plants to be threatened, and so ensuring you can properly take care of these things and keep your plants safe is essential. From harsh weather to pests and diseases, many things can threaten the health of your plants. Learning what these things are and how to combat them is essential for having a healthy and thriving garden.

### **Survival and Protection**



If you are planning to grow all your food right from your garden, then ensuring the safety of your plants is vital. Having well-draining soil for your plants is one of the first things to consider because this is crucial to ensuring their health. Most plants dislike having their roots sit in water, and when they don't have proper drainage, this can cause the roots to rot, making it impossible to get the proper nutrients to the plant. When growing plants in containers, the more drainage you have, the better.

Remember when you are removing your plants from their nursery containers to transplant them, you will need to be especially careful. They are very fragile when they are in that stage. If you simply try to pull them up by their stem, you are likely to injure the plant. You will also want to ensure the plant is hydrated before you try to pull it from its container. There may be times when soaking your entire nursery container in some water so it can soak it all up for easy removal.

Plants in containers need to be frequently watered, but when you do this, you also lose nutrients in the soil. You will want to fertilize the soil you plan to move your plant into before planting it. You don't want your plants to miss out on any nutrients as they won't be able to properly grow if this happens. It is typically a good idea to go with a slow-release fertilizer at first, so your plants don't get too much at once.

Always take extra care when it comes time to plant. The last thing you want to do is put your plants into shock before they even have the chance to reach maturity. Before planting, always break up any air pockets in the soil and ensure you are planting at the proper depth. This can vary depending on the plants, so you will need to know your plant's needs before starting. Once you've planted, you will need to ensure your plant is getting enough water and that you are fertilizing correctly. You want to be sure to never under or overwater your plants as this is an easy way to kill them.

If you really want your plants to do well, there is a lot that goes into caring for them. A lot can go wrong simply trying to get them planted, so taking care of every step will help ensure the health and survival of your plants.

### ***Protecting Plants from Cold and Frost***

Many plants don't do well in the cold, and during the winter, when it begins to frost, this can spell disaster for your plants, especially if you don't know how to protect them. If your plants are still young by the time winter comes, it is imperative to ensure they are protected. All it takes is one frost, and all the plants you worked so hard to care for could be gone in an instant. You can tell if your plants have been damaged by the frost because they will appear blackened and show signs of damage. They may also become limp or change color a bit.

Certain vegetables aren't as likely to get damaged by the winter frost, and some may even taste better after a frost when you harvest them next season. If you live somewhere with cold winters, it may be a good idea to look into some of these vegetables and see if there are any you are interested in growing.

If you have potted plants, the best thing for you to do when the temperature begins to drop is to bring them inside. If you bring them inside, you have better control over the temperature, and you can ensure they won't get too cold. Adding layers of mulch to your outdoor garden beds can also be helpful as it adds an extra barrier against the cold and helps keep your plants safe. Watering your plants in the morning is also essential as this will give the soil the chance to absorb heat during the day.

You also want to learn the frost dates for your area so you can plan accordingly. When you know the frost dates where you live, you can try to ensure your plants have all the protection needed ahead of time. This will lessen the chance of your plants becoming damaged and give you time to prepare.

## ***Protecting Plants in Summer***

Certain plants have a really rough time in the summer because of how hot and dry it can get. It can be challenging to ensure your plants get enough water when it is always hot. However, you don't want to end up overwatering your plants. The key to ensuring your plants are getting the right amount of water is to water them in the morning or the evening, and when you water them, you want to do it slowly. When you water your plants

too quickly, the water is more likely to pool on the surface, whereas when you water it slowly, you give the soil the chance to properly absorb it.

If you have plants in containers, you want to ensure you are fertilizing your soil because the more often you water, the more nutrients you are likely to flush out. A good slow-release fertilizer is most likely your best option because it won't give your plants too much, but it will still ensure they are getting what they need to thrive. It is also crucial that you check your plants for pests often. Pests can create all sorts of chaos in your garden and can really hurt your plants. Be sure you are also cutting off any dead flowers from your plants.

### ***Protecting Plants from Soil-Borne Diseases***

Soil-borne diseases can be one of the most challenging things to deal with when it comes to gardening. Even if you are doing everything to care for your plant, it still seems sick, and you can't figure out why. If this happens to you, it is more than likely because the soil you are using is diseased. This occurs when certain microorganisms begin moving beneath the soil, and the worst part about this is they can't typically be seen by the naked eye, so you don't even know they are there until your plants begin to get sick. When it comes to soil-borne diseases, the disease was already there and was simply waiting for your plants.

Four different types of diseases can affect the soil: fungi, bacteria, viruses, and nematodes. Unfortunately, there is no perfect or ideal way to get rid of these forever, especially if you live somewhere where this is common. To help keep your soil healthy, you must clean up all garden debris at the end of the season. When you don't do this, your soil is more susceptible to disease. You can also try rotating your vegetables in the same family, which will help switch things up and keep your soil healthy. You can also help prevent fungus by treating your garden with sulfur or copper early in the season.

### ***Protecting Plants from Animals***

Harsh weather, diseases, or improper watering/soiling aren't the only threats to your plants. A blooming garden isn't just a pretty attraction for your friends and families but also an army of pests and animals that will leave no stone unturned in ruining your garden space. But don't worry as this chapter has got you covered here.

When keeping your plants protected from animals, you first need to know what you are keeping them safe from. Do you have raccoons or rabbits? Or maybe your pests are a bit smaller, and you can't seem to keep away the bugs. Small animals are most likely to do the most damage in the shortest time as they will go through and try to eat everything they can from your garden. So how do you keep them away? There are a few ways. One thing you can always consider is building fencing around your garden. This will help keep small animals out, and sometimes this may be the only effective way to keep your garden safe. It is a good idea to put up a fence right away to help prevent animals from stealing your plants.

### ***Protecting Plants from Human Error***

With so many things to remember when it comes to gardening, it can be easy to make mistakes from time to time. Even the best gardeners sometimes make mistakes, and knowing the most common mistakes can help prevent them. Something easy to mistake is potting soil. When you go to get just about any gardening soil, you will see many different bags labeled as potting soil, and while it may be easy to just go ahead and grab the largest and cheapest bag you can find, this most likely won't be good for your plants. You need to know the specific type of soil your plants require. Otherwise, your plants won't do well and may die out before you can get any harvest from them.

Another common mistake is choosing the wrong pot for your plants. There are so many different pots available, and while some may be visually pleasing, this doesn't mean they are the best pots for your plants. If a pot doesn't have drainage holes, you don't want to put your plants inside it as this is more likely to kill them. Going hand in hand with this, when starting out, it can be easy to forget to water your plants often. When your plants

don't get enough water, they won't grow or supply you with any food. Failing to give your plants the proper amount of water is the fastest and easiest way to kill your garden.

Always pay attention to where you are planting your crops. If your plants require full sun and you plant them somewhere with heavy shade, they are not likely to get all the sunlight they need to thrive. Pay attention to the weather, and always be sure to protect your plants from the wind. High winds can damage plants, so it is important to keep this in mind. When you first purchase your crops, you will want to ensure your plants are healthy. If you buy a plant that is not in peak health, it can spread pests or diseases to your other plants.

Never shop for plants simply because they look nice. If you want a food garden that will thrive and provide you with all the food you need to get by, you need to be very careful with what you choose to grow. If you only grow food that "looks nice," chances are, you won't be able to meet your calorie requirements to get you through the season.

### ***Protecting Plants from Pests***

You want to take care of your garden and keep it free from pests, but you don't want to use all the harsh chemicals you find in the stores. Not only are these harmful to your plants, but they are also harmful to you. When you use pesticides with harsh chemicals, the chemicals can seep into the food. When this happens, you end up ingesting them when you eat them. Thankfully, there are plenty of very effective organic options to save your plants from having to ensure the harshness of chemical pesticides.

You can try to protect your plants by filling a spray bottle with one tablespoon of soap and one quart of water. You can spray this directly onto the infected parts of your plants, and it won't harm them. You can make similar sprays with vegetable oil and neem oil as well. Garlic spray also works quite well against pests due to its strong scent.

When using any type of pesticide, whether it be homemade or something you picked up from the store, you always want to be sure to test it on your

plants first to ensure they won't have any reaction. Your plants are sensitive, and the last thing you want to do is stress them out.

Think about what kinds of crops you plan to grow and consider everything mentioned in this chapter. Protecting your plants is essential when starting a survival garden because if you can't protect your plants, they can't provide you with food. Taking care of your plants requires much more than simply watering them and fertilizing them. You have to pay attention to everything to ensure they remain happy and healthy.



## **Chapter 12: The Gardener's Support**

It can often seem challenging to find others who are just as interested in gardening as you. Maybe you want someone you can share your passion with or someone you can simply sit down and talk to about different tips and tricks to keep your gardens thriving. Whatever your reasoning, it is never a bad idea to seek support when starting out. It is good to have others who know about gardening in your circle because they can offer you tips and tricks that you may not be able to find elsewhere. This chapter is filled with all the information you need to find others who share your love of gardening.

### **Finding a Gardening Mentor**

It's always a great experience to learn a skill like gardening from experts who have mastered the ins and outs of it. Connecting with other gardeners is crucial because they can teach you things you really can't learn anywhere else. Sometimes, the best information just comes from experience. The location you live in has a lot to do with what your garden will do. Some places are a bit different than others, and it can be helpful to have a mentor who knows the area and all the tips and tricks to make your garden thrive.

They can teach you everything from what plants to grow to how to save money and time when caring for your garden. Even if you always check the weather, nothing compares to the experience of a gardener who has spent years learning the ropes. Experienced gardeners know what to expect and how to prepare for the worst and keep their plants thriving. Getting a mentor is important because they will help you figure out how to form the perfect garden of your dreams.

When seeking a mentor, there are a few different places you can look. Check your area to see if there are any gardening centers in your community, or maybe even a gardening club. Another place you can check out is your local botanical garden. Local gardeners and farmers are also great because they know all about the climate in your area and are well-experienced in gardening. Most gardeners love giving information to help others, so finding a mentor shouldn't be too challenging. Simply find somewhere you think they are likely to be and spark a conversation.

Getting yourself a mentor gives you someone you can talk to who shares your love of gardening. It is something you can both get excited about, and as they share all their tips and tricks with you, your garden will begin to thrive better than ever. After a while, you may share some of your own tricks with them. Gardening doesn't need to be something you do alone. There are plenty of other gardeners out there who love it and would be more than happy to share their secrets with someone else who is passionate.

### ***Best Gardening Groups on Facebook***

When you can't seem to find a mentor, don't fret. There are plenty of groups on Facebook that discuss all things gardening for free! Some great groups



for you to check out include the following:

- Gardening Tips for Beginners
- Indoor Gardening Tips/Ideas
- Frugal Gardening (Grow Your Own Food)
- Container Gardening and Vertical Gardening
- Raised Bed Gardening
- Gardening on a Budget

These groups are great resources when you are getting started with gardening. There are all sorts of helpful tips, and the members are happy to help you and answer your questions. In these groups, you can talk about all things gardening with others who are just as passionate about it as you are. It is always nice to have a community of people as this is simply one way to get help with your garden.

### ***Best Online Courses on Gardening***

When seeking more knowledge on gardening, taking some online courses is always a great idea, and there are even free online classes available for you. These are great because they give you valuable information to help improve your skills as a gardener. Oregon State University has a great free online course that will introduce you to the basics of starting your own vegetable garden. It is a 12-course program that offers valuable information to help your garden thrive and supply you with everything necessary to survive.

Online learning website Alison also has a free course on vegetable gardening. This will teach you how to care for your organic vegetables and how to keep your garden healthy with only organic fertilizers and pesticides. There are also a few videos available about certain individual vegetables that you may want to check out, depending on what you are looking for. If you simply wish to help grow your carrots organically, then choosing a course about just carrots may be the best option.

When first starting out, you may also want to find some classes on how to get started. This can be very helpful and can help guide you through the first steps you need to take when it comes to ensuring the health of your garden.

A few examples of classes that are available for a fee include MasterClass, which is taught by Ron Finley. These classes are great and will teach you anything and everything you need to know about gardening.

Choosing the suitable classes for you doesn't need to be complicated. There are many options out there, and all you really need to do is find the one that works for you. If you are on a budget, some classes are offered for free, and some have a paid subscription, but if you plan to have a garden you can rely on, this may not be the worst idea. Regardless of which classes you are interested in, online courses are always an excellent way to gain all the information you need to grow your own food.

In the modern world, there is an app for everything, and gardening is no exception. Once you get your garden started, plenty of free apps are available to help make things much easier for you. Some of these include apps to help remind you to water your plants on time, apps that help you identify specific plants simply by uploading a picture, and even those that help you identify trees just from their leaves. Some apps will help you track everything you have in your garden and offer information on how to keep your plants happy.

Keep an eye out for essential resources when getting started because with gardening, the more information you can get, the better. Some essential resources you can check out include the USDA hardiness zone map. This is available to you for free and will help you determine what to plant and when. This is a fantastic resource you want to utilize as much as possible. Also, check your local county's extension office because they can supply you with valuable and credible information that will help you make certain choices for your garden.

It can also be helpful to talk to a local nursery because the people there are going to know exactly what it takes to grow in your climate. They will usually have information that will help you set up your garden for success.

Planning out your garden is essential, which is why you should prepare a garden journal. This will help you design your garden, keep track of your crops, and take notes on all the things you notice when it comes to your plants. Over time, this garden journal will become one of your most helpful

resources because it will help you learn everything about starting your garden and how to keep it thriving for years to come.



## Conclusion

The food you eat matters. It is what fuels your body and keeps you healthy. You always want to be careful with the food you eat, and though you may be buying fruits and vegetables from the store regularly, you still may not be getting everything you could be when it comes to your overall health. You never know what is in the things you buy from the store, and even if you are buying organic, there is no guarantee. When you grow your own food, you don't need to worry about this because you know that food is coming from

your own garden. You know how it was grown and everything that went into it. You appreciate it more, and it is better for you.

Growing food is a great way to save money and, if done correctly, can eliminate your need to buy food from the store. Being self-sufficient is a great feeling because you know you can take care of yourself. It is nice when you can become self-sufficient and no longer need to rely on others, and it is a good feeling. However, to achieve this, a lot of work must be done first. Starting your own garden isn't always easy, mainly when you are limited on space or don't have much free time. Gardening can be filled with trial and error, but there is nothing wrong with that. It is how you learn and improve.

You want to ensure you have everything planned out ahead of time when starting your own garden. There are many things you will want to figure out and prepare for. What do you want to grow? How much space do you have? Growing your own food takes a lot of work, but it is work you can be proud of. The main things you really want to focus on when setting up your garden are figuring out what you will grow and learning what those plants need to thrive.

Getting started with your garden is a process, but it is worth it. If you've tried to grow food in the past with no success, instead of getting frustrated, start asking yourself why. Figure out what went wrong and find ways to improve. Plants need a lot of care to survive, and during your first year, it is a good idea to start small. Providing yourself with all the food you need to survive won't happen overnight, but with time you can create a beautiful garden you can be proud of. Find others who share your passion for gardening and learn what you can from those who have gone through it.

Using the information given to you in this book, you should be able to create a garden that will help you grow everything you need to survive. Knowing where all your food comes from is a fantastic feeling, and you know your body will thank you for it. Eating healthy, fresh food is always possible if you are willing to put in the work. By learning everything you can about growing your own food, you have unlocked the secret to healthier living. Now that you know the basics, it is time to go on and make the most of it!

If you find the information in this book has helped you, please feel free to leave a review and share your success stories!

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