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Gardening

Niche Booklets Series

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Developing the Perfect Garden: Utilize the Zone Gardening Method

Interested in developing a thriving garden around your yard at your home? The first step is to consider the zone gardening method or scheme. Through the zone gardening method, you place different types of plants together in such a manner that they will benefit each other as they grow. The zone gardening method is gaining in popularity in many parts of the world.

At the heart of the zone gardening method or scheme is the division of your entire yard and garden into different zones. Divide your garden into areas. For example, have an area for herbs, another for vegetables, another for flowers, another for bushes and so on. This type of gardening plan requires planning on your part but you will find the process actually very satisfying.

There are a number of benefits to be realized through the zone gardening method or theme. One, this type of garden plans helps you to better manage your overall gardening program. Your vegetable plants and flowering plants and herbs and so forth each have different cultivation requirements. By planting them in zones, you will be better able to meet the nutritional and related needs of these various types of plants.

In addition, certain plants flourish when planted near certain other plants. Visit your local garden store staff as you select different plants for your garden and determine which plants flourish when planted in close proximity to other plants. In the end, you will we have a very attractive and prosperous garden that will be a point of pride for you.

Five-Minute Gardening

Growing flowers and other plants can be a richly rewarding activity for most people, but with today's packed schedules and busy lifestyles, it can be close to impossible to find any down time to create your own garden area.

That's no reason to miss out on the joy of gardening! You no longer have to plant an extensive garden in your backyard to be considered a gardener – buy a few houseplants or plant some flower seeds in a pot and you, my friend, are a gardener.

Even people with the busiest of schedules can find five minutes at some point during the day and tend to their plants. Reap the benefits of this calming and peaceful activity in your own life with just five minutes every day!

Good choices for small and quick gardening are plants in pots, boxes or tubs. You avoid the problem of weeds and can dispatch any unfriendly insects fairly quickly. Be sure to maintain regular watering schedules as well as sunlight checks every so often to ensure your plants are receiving the nutrition they need.

Houseplants also work well for five-minute gardening. You will need to water your indoor plants regularly and rotate their positions in the sun every so often, but most outdoor gardening concerns do not apply.

The major challenge of houseplants is adequate hydration and sunlight – stay on top of those issues and you essentially have a free ride to healthy plants.

To properly display your potted garden, consider buying a cast-iron baker's rack with at least three shelves. You can use this outdoors and place your various pots and boxes on the shelves for a stunning display of color and foliage. Other people may choose to simply place the pots and tubs around a patio or other outdoor area. Regardless of how you display the fruits of your labor, the important thing is that you take pride in your accomplishment.

Gardening is nurturing: you cultivate and support each plant to strength; through this connection with nature and the earth, your spirit is nurtured by the development of new life under your very own touch.

Invest in a Good Set of Gardening Tools

A growing number of men and women in different parts of the world have taken up gardening. Gardening has become one of the most widely enjoyed hobbies and pastimes for hundreds of thousands of people across the globe. If you have an interest in becoming involved in the wonderful world of gardening, your first step on that course is to invest in a good set of gardening tools.

When it comes to gardening, any able-bodied person is capable of putting plants and seeds into the ground. However, the real skill in gardening comes in the form of successful cultivation. To that end, it is vital that you marshal together and invest in a good set of gardening tools.

There are a number of reasons it is necessary for you to take the time and to spend the money necessary to invest in a good set of tools. Purchasing a set of high quality gardening tools may seem like you are spending a great deal more money than is necessary when there are many low cost gardening tool options available on the market today. However, when you do take the step of investing in a set of high quality gardening tools, you really are making an investment in your garden's future.

When you spend the money to invest in a good set of tools for your garden, you will be purchasing tools that will last for a long period of time. When you spend less money at the front end, you will end up buying tools that are not designed to stand the test of time. You will end up having to replace your cheap gardening tools. Eventually, you will end up spending more money buying new sets of gardening tools every so often. You're much better off investing in a high quality set of gardening tools in the first instance.

As you search for high quality gardening tools, consider the options available to you both on online shops and in brick-and-mortar shops. Spend some time shopping around for the best possible tools for your gardening ventures.

Growing a Healthy Garden

All gardeners share a common goal regardless of age, race or gender: each one wants to grow a healthy garden. Some may have flower gardens while others focus on vegetables, but the theme stays the same. Giving your garden the best advantages can seem challenging, especially when you consider all the insects and blights that could decide to visit at any time.

Even though it can seem like a risky proposition, gardening is actually fairly easy and definitely low-stress in spite of all the things that *could* go wrong. Take a few simple precautions in and around your garden, and before you know it your plot of land will be blossoming with the fruits of your labors!

The soil is a key factor in a healthy garden. If you haven't had a soil test done before planting, take one now – your county extension office can do this for you for less than five dollars. Depending on your location, soils can be too acidic or alkaline and retard growth. To correct this, use one-quarter cup of white vinegar in a quart of water and use it throughout the garden plot to neutralize the pH of the soil.

If you are concerned about pests and insects, be sure to leave most of your everyday garden bugs alone – these plant-friendly bugs actually defend the area from the pests that devour all kinds of flowers and plants. Plant a border of marigolds around the perimeter of your garden space and that will deter many of the malevolent insects.

Above all, remember to give your garden the right amount of water (which can depend on your climate) and get rid of weeds before they choke out your small darlings.

Gardening is a rewarding activity physically and emotionally, and the benefits of tending your bit of earth go much deeper than the blooming plants and thriving vegetables. Your connection with the earth will nurture both your garden and you.

Cultivate a Perfectly Lovely Garden Spot: Mulch Your Flowerbeds Regularly

If you are like many people, you have taken up the activity of gardening. You have established a number of flowerbeds around your house. Naturally, you want your flowerbeds and plants you have selected for your gardens to thrive and flourish. To that end, you are wise to regularly mulch your flowerbeds.

Many gardeners overlook and neglect taking the time to mulch, which involves spreading or laying a protective covering of sawdust, compost or paper on the ground. These people wonder what real value can be had through the process of mulching flowerbeds. There are many true and lasting benefits to be realized through the process of regularly mulching your flowerbeds.

One of the primary benefits of mulching is that it protects your garden from being overcome with weeds. In the absence of mulching, you will be forced to spend a great deal of time weeding your gardens.

In addition to preventing the growth of weeds about your garden, mulching also assists in enriching the ground where your flowers and plants grow. Through mulching, you can increase the nutrient value in the soil and prevent the leaching of important nutrients out of the soil. Ultimately, you will have a robust crop of glorious flowers and plants.

Mulching also prevents soil erosion, which can be a serious problem when you're preparing, creating and cultivating flowerbed. Again, through mulching, you can prevent the loss of soil from your garden patches. Additionally, mulching reduces evaporation as well as maintains even soil temperature.

In the end, through the process of mulching you will end up having thriving and very attractive flowerbeds. You will have flowers and plants that you will be proud of.

Houseplants 101

Adding vibrant green plants around the home is a fantastic way to brighten up the atmosphere and clean up your indoor air at the same time, but sometimes houseplants are so unobtrusive that they can be forgotten.

If you want to keep your indoor plants healthy and thriving, it's important to give each one regular attention and be aware of common issues that can become problems if not addressed. Caring for houseplants is relatively simple, though, and really only requires common sense. With regular care, houseplants can be a powerful double shot for your home as they add a unique flair to rooms and improve the indoor environment as well.

If you are just beginning with houseplants, start with only two or three plants to get into the habit of caring for them. Choose lush green plants as the best bet for easy care. Stay away from fragile plants like orchids unless you are willing to devote more time to houseplant care. Simple plants like ferns require only basic care yet reward you with vibrant foliage that livens up even the dullest of rooms.

The majority of houseplants prefer at least some sun throughout the day, so place plants in a south- or southwesterly-facing room for maximum benefit. You should regularly rotate each houseplant, though, since it will naturally grow toward the light. Rotating it prevents leaning or lopsidedness.

Water, along with sunlight, is probably the most important factor in houseplant health. Be sure to water your plants until the soil feels moist but you should never see water standing on top of the soil – that's too much.

Monitor your plants carefully in the winter since central heating can dry out even the most hydrated plant in a matter of days. It's a good idea to include misting in your watering routine. Buy a simple spray bottle, fill with water, and then lightly mist the leaves of your plants to prevent dehydration.

Simple care is best for indoor plants and you will be pleasantly rewarded with delightful foliage even in the coldest winter months.

21 Gardening Tips

1. Don't put houseplants in direct sunlight. Although houseplants should have some light, their leaves will wilt if left directly exposed to the sun.
2. Get a pad to kneel on when you're working in the garden. The pad will protect your knees and limit how dirty you get.
3. If you're not sure what you want the layout of your garden to be, plant in pots so you can move plants around until you're happy.
4. Water features in the garden need to be kept fresh. Install plants like water violet to keep the water oxygenated.
5. Soak eggshells in water overnight and then use the solution as a fertilizer. The solution will be full of nutrients from the eggshells.
6. Never plant anything under conifers because those particular trees cause the soil to become acidic. Plants around conifers would not grow.
7. Make sure any extras in your garden, washing lines for example, are properly installed so they are unlikely to disturb the equilibrium in your garden.
8. Use climbers to cover ugly walls and shed that have become an eyesore in your otherwise gorgeous garden.
9. Try to keep a garden diary. That way you'll remember what you planted before, notice any patterns and be able to plan for the future.
10. Don't plant too many plants in one area. Competition for resources will cause growth of poor-quality plants.
11. Glossy leaves reflect light so it is better to place plants with glossy leaves in shadowy corners to make your garden look bigger. They'll thrive there too.

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12. Just because you live in the city doesn't mean you can't have a garden. These flowering plants are known to survive and thrive in most cities with extremely hot temperatures and high pollution: Madagascar periwinkle, lantana, impatiens, cosmos, cleome (spider flower) and canna (Indian flag).
13. Make your garden more fragrant by planting more lightly colored or white flowers. You can also give your garden a rich fragrant smell by adding thick-textured flowers such as gardenia, citrus and magnolia, which have very distinctive and intense scents.
14. Always keep air vents clear, so don't plant climbers, bushes or trees anywhere that could possibly obstruct them. If they're already there, cut them back as soon as they begin to obstruct the vents.
15. Recycle your used teabags as a source of nutrients for your plants. The contents can provide a welcome change for the soil and help plant growth.
16. Open the greenhouse via the door or windows for at least two hours a day. It recycles the air and gets rid of any excess heat.
17. Use a pitchfork to aerate the lawn regularly. This helps natural drainage and also encourages movement of insects beneath the ground.
18. If you don't have much time for gardening, stick to plants in containers, such as tubs, boxes and baskets. They are easier to feed and tend if you have a busy lifestyle.
19. Never re-pot in a pot that is too big. If the roots don't grow quickly enough, the new compost sours and becomes unusable for the plant.
20. If you're buying ready-potted plants of flowers, make sure that they have already begun to flower; otherwise there is a risk that they may never flower at all.
21. Add compost to your garden soil two to four weeks before you plant. This way, the compost will be integrated within your garden soil.