

Gardening Tips

1. We have an amazing abundance of **flowers and edible plants** this time of year—come in and pick out something fun that you haven't grown before!
2. When watering by hand, **occasionally hose down the entire plant** during hot weather. This washes off dust and reduces spider mite problems.
3. **Prop up** heavy, fruit laden branches, or thin them to prevent breakage.

Fragrance For Your Garden!

Take time to smell the roses, but don't limit the fragrance in your yard to only roses. Here are some others to plant, categorized by type, to make your garden especially fragrant. Not all of these are currently in bloom. For planting ideas, see our back article.



Shrubs: *Roses, gardenia, night-blooming jasmine, lilac, and citrus.*

Vines: *Honeysuckle, wisteria, Madagascar jasmine, star jasmine, and pink jasmine.*

Annuals and Perennials: *Lavender, dianthus, heliotrope, and others.*

Enjoy Shade Trees

Sipping lemonade under a big tree... doesn't that sound good right now? The sooner you plant a shade tree, the sooner you will be able to enjoy this as well as all the other benefits of trees! Here are a few good shade trees for our area:

Chinese pistache (fantastic fall color and tolerate adverse soil conditions), *liquidambar* (excellent fall color, upright when young, but spread out as they age), and *crape myrtle* (a smaller tree that loves heat and provides a wonderful summer flower display).



Some others to ask us about include *evergreen elm, magnolia, flowering pear and flowering plum, camphor, ginkgo, fruitless mulberry, jacaranda, and tipu tree (Tipuana tipu).*

Replenish or spread **MULCH** around plants to conserve moisture and reduce weeding time. You want it about two to three inches thick. Leave a gap between mulch and the crown of the plants. Some plants (like ivy) don't care, but most plants do better when air can circulate around the base of their trunk. We're the mulching experts! Ask us to recommend the best mulch for your particular situation.



Putter, Pinch, & Plant

A little TLC will keep most annuals blooming much longer. The key is to keep them actively growing by feeding regularly with new *Extreme Gardening All Purpose Feeder Packs*, which increases the size and number of flowers, and watering regularly.

Also, "deadhead" regularly—remove all old flowers from the plant. If old flowers are allowed to stay on the plant, most plants put more energy into seed production and either stop or slow down flower production. Pinching or cutting out old flowers stimulates the plant to produce more flowers in an effort to reproduce.

Pull out annuals that are "over the hill" and replace them with some of our beautiful flowers that bloom from mid-summer through fall.




Have Ants In Your Pants?

We mean plants, of course! If you see ants crawling up a plant, take a closer look. These Argentine ants are strongly attracted to honeydew, a sugary substance that insects such as aphids, scales, and leafhoppers excrete. Honeydew is such an important food for ants that they seek out and 'tend' the insects that produce it in order to increase their food source. They even fight off predators and move aphids to new feeding sites.



Control ants and these other plant pests often disappear too. A non-chemical way you can sometimes control ants on plants is to apply our *Tanglefoot*, a sticky material, in a band around the trunk of the plant. We also have other effective controls—ask us to point out the best one for your particular situation.

 **Bonus Tip:** After watering, dig down an inch or two to see if you are watering enough. The objective is to **water deeper but less often**. This saves water and encourages deeper root systems.

Basic Freezing Tips

Extend your garden bounty for months after the harvesting season by freezing your fruits and vegetables. Here is a simple checklist to follow.

Check your freezer with a freezer thermometer to ensure it is 0° degrees or below.

Select the freshest fruits and vegetables and freeze as soon as possible after picking.

Wash produce in cold water; remove stems, leaves, skins, seeds, pits, and any bruised areas. Cut the fruit and vegetables into pieces.

Place *berries* in a single layer on a cookie sheet and chill until semi-firm before placing pieces in freezer bags or container.

Remove as much air as possible from freezer bags. Leave a 1-inch space at top of heavy-duty plastic containers for expansion. Do not use glass!

Label and date your containers and use before 8-12 months.

To preserve the flavor, color, and texture of vegetables—blanch *carrots, asparagus, cabbage, peas, and squash* in boiling water for about 2 minutes, and *corn, broccoli and cauliflower* for about 3 minutes. Cool before freezing. *Eggplant, peppers, and pumpkin* can be frozen raw.



Design for MAXIMUM Impact!

Here are design tips to provide maximum impact and enjoyment in your garden.

Grow up! When designing flowerbeds, add some height with shrubs, small trees, and vines on trellises.

Experiment with color. Combine colors you might not wear together, such as purple and orange. Also try new colors not found in your indoor décor, such as lime green or vibrant magenta. Sometimes simpler is better, such as a sea of just white or yellow flowers alone.

Plant by sections. Complete

one small area before moving on to the next one. Allow yourself to focus on the details.

Try new plants.

Don't keep planting the same plants and flowers. Ask us to show you what is new and exciting for our area!

Be Creative. Trust your instincts and preferences. Come into the nursery and pick out what is appealing to you. Set them in the aisle and rearrange them until you find the perfect combination.



Fragrance in Your Garden

Many attractive plants have the added bonus of providing fragrance. To enjoy their delightful scents to the fullest, consider adding them to the following areas:

✿ Place containers of fragrant plants at your front entrance. Not only does the pleasant aroma welcome your guests, it's also a good way to transition from a noisy, exhaust-filled freeway to home-sweet-home after a long day's work.

- ✿ Under a window that is frequently open.
- ✿ Beside a hot tub.
- ✿ On the patio near chairs and benches.
- ✿ Wherever prevailing breezes will drift the scent into the house.
- ✿ On a rail or pedestal at nose height.
- ✿ In raised beds.

Ask us to point out fragrant plants for your specific needs!

Bee Count: Be Involved!

If you would like to help researchers map pollinators and determine which areas are doing well and which areas are in crisis, be sure to mark **July 16th** on your calendar and participate in the **Great Bee Count Day!**

The first step to getting involved in *The Great Sunflower Project* is to sign up online at yourgardenshow.com (access the 'Citizen Scientist' link at the top and scroll down to The Great Sunflower Project). All you need is a valid email address, a willingness to count bees on specific 'bee magnet' plants in your yard for 15 minutes, and then submit your data on July 16th (they provide the form).

While you are visiting yourgardenshow.com, be sure to check out the bee guide, building a bee garden, view the 2010 'Bee-o-Meter' results for your area, and look at their other helpful resources! Avid bee watchers can continue to participate the rest of the year at the level they select.



Greek Salad

A refreshingly cool salad to serve on a hot summer night!

2 c. cherry tomatoes, halved

3 c. cucumbers quartered and diced (and peeled if skin is not edible)

2/3 c. feta, crumbled with a fork

1/2 red onion, thinly sliced

1/4 c. kalamata olives, pitted & sliced

1 sprig fresh mint—remove leaves & cut into a chiffonade (optional)

1/8 tsp. dried oregano

1 clove garlic, smashed with a chef's knife or pushed through a garlic press

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

2 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Combine tomatoes, cucumbers, feta, sliced onion, olives, and fresh mint in a serving bowl. In a mixing bowl, whisk together the remaining ingredients. Then pour over the salad and toss gently to combine. Add additional salt or pepper as desired.

