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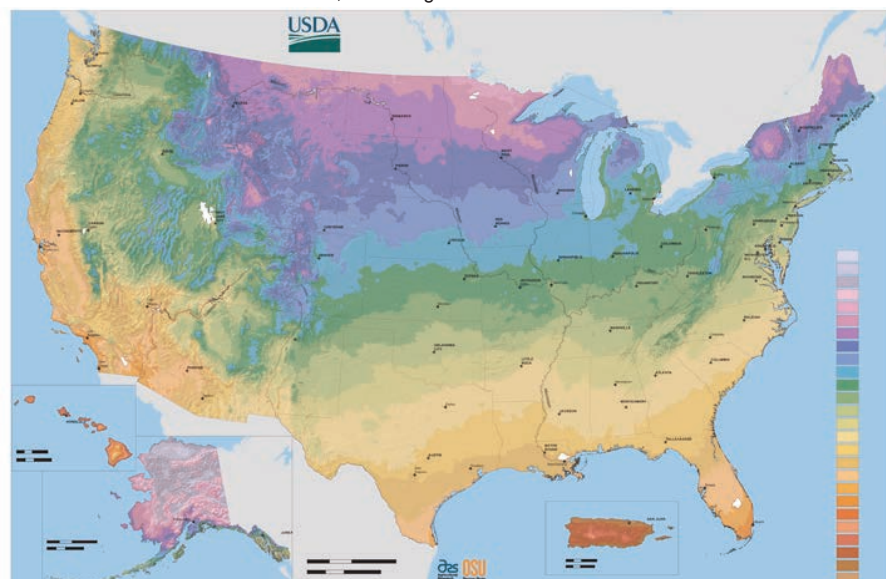
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Understand Hardiness Zones Before Planting

Gardening benefits the environment in myriad ways. Maintaining natural landscapes and preserving green spaces can reduce the collective carbon footprint of the human race. Trees, flowers and other greenery filter the air and create welcoming habitats for all species of animals and insects. Many home gardeners set out each spring to create landscapes that cater to all of the senses. But choosing plants that are unlikely to thrive in certain climates can lead to dissatisfaction and premature plant demise and may require gardeners to use more fertilizers, pesticides and other not-so-Earth-friendly techniques to help plants thrive. One of the more important steps gardeners can take before spring arrives is to educate themselves about plant hardiness zones. Hardiness zones are defined by the average climatic conditions of the region and are broken down into various zones. The USDA Hardiness Zone map divides North America into 13 separate zones. Each zone is marked by 10 F incremental differences from the last zone. In some versions of

the map, each zone is further divided into "a" and "b" regions. The National Gardening Association says the USDA Hardiness Zone Map was revised in 2012. The latest version was jointly developed by the USDA's Agricultural Research Service and Oregon State University's PRISM Climate Group. To help develop the new map, the USDA and Oregon State University requested that horticultural and climatic experts review the zones in their geographic areas. As a result, the zone boundaries in the 2012 edition of the map have shifted in many areas. Canada's Hardiness Zone map, updated in 2010, uses nine different zones. Zone maps are tools that show where permanent landscape plants can adapt. Home gardeners who are looking for shrubs or perennials to last year after year should recognize that such plants must tolerate year-round conditions, including the lowest and

highest temperatures and the amount of precipitation. Snow cover and humidity also can impact a plant's propensity to thrive. While zone maps are not perfect, they can be useful in planning and ensuring the survival of future gardens. Plant and seed manufacturer Burpee says that other factors to consider that also affect the viability of plants include wind, moisture and soil conditions. The company offers an interactive zone finder on their website that will indicate the hardiness zone as well as average first and last frost dates. Visit www.burpee.com/findgrowzone to enter a zip code. Learn more about plant hardiness at planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb. In Canada, visit the site www.planthardiness.gc.ca/?m=1. Hardiness Zone map courtesy of the USDA. View an interactive version at the USDA website.





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Landscaping Needs Vary By Season

Judging a home by its appearance is often par for the home-buying course. In fact, according to the National Association of Realtors®, 49 percent of buying decisions are made from the street.

An appealing home exterior suggests the homeowner takes pride in his or her home and wants to make every effort to maintain that home. Curb appeal involves various components a home's exterior, but beautiful landscaping can make a home stand out. While maintaining a lawn is something many homeowners may think is exclusive to spring and summer, lawn maintenance is really a year-round endeavor. The following steps can help anyone maintain curb appeal no matter the season.

SPRING: Spring is a season of renewal when plants and trees will begin to look fresh and green once more. Spring maintenance includes applying fertilizer to lawns, replenishing mulch in planting beds, creating more pronounced edges around the lawn and garden beds, and testing soil. Some homeowners like to apply a weed-prevention product in the spring as well. Spring is a good time to plant annuals that will add a pop of

color to the landscape. For those concerned about permanent planting, container gardening allows homeowners to move around planters in a configuration that works best for them.

SUMMER: Summer landscaping is all about maintaining what was established in the spring. Regular mowing, weeding and trimming can keep a landscape manicured. Other than drought, weeds are perhaps the biggest lawn and garden nuisance to a landscape in the summertime. Black medic, carpetweed, knotweed, mallow and prostrate spurge are some of the weeds that will crop up during the summer. Seeds begin to germinate as soil warms up. According to the University of Maryland Extension, control with a broadleaf postemergent herbicide applied when the weed is actively growing will help prevent weeds from suffocating lawns.

AUTUMN: Autumn is often a forgotten season when it comes to maintaining a landscape. However, fall is a key time to keep landscapes in order. According to the landscaping resource LoveYourLandscape.com, fall is the ideal time to tend to a lawn

that just endured summer heat. Seeding and fertilizing can ensure a stronger lawn come next spring. Perennials should be pruned and cut back. Raking leaves will help keep the property looking presentable.

WINTER: One of the ways to maintain an attractive landscape throughout winter is to install plants that can survive the colder temperatures. Winterberry is a cousin of holly, but loses its leaves in the fall. The bright red berries can be a stark contrast to the white of winter snowfall. Camellia is an evergreen that blooms from fall to early spring and looks like pink roses. Heather is a popular plant in the United Kingdom, but is growing in popularity on this side of the Atlantic as well. This plant blooms all year and offers beautiful flowers in summer and fall. In winter, the thick foliage makes for an appealing contrast to the more delicate blooms of other winter plants. Maintaining a landscape through the seasons makes a home attractive all year long.




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Problems That Can Lead To Lawn Damage

A beautiful lawn is a goal for many homeowners. Some homeowners may find that lovely lawns may last momentarily, only to disappear when damage, be it pest, weather- or child-related, sets in. While well-established turf can be resilient, even the most well-maintained lawns can be vulnerable. Preventing lawn damage first involves getting to the root of the problem.

•Lack of sunlight: All plants need the proper ratio of sunlight to grow. Too much sunlight and plant blades can scorch. Too little sunlight and grass may turn brown and die. Although there are shade-tolerant varieties of grass, homeowners also can explore alternative landscapes. Work in a garden bed or create a design that utilizes gravel or mulch. Avoid aggressively pruning back trees to give the

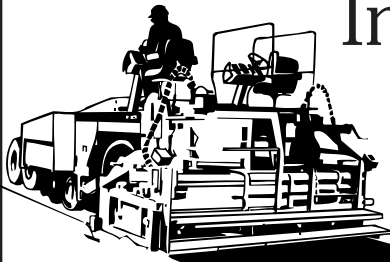
lawn more sunlight in that area, as this may just damage the trees.
•Chemical spills: Gasoline and fertilizer spills and pesticide applications in high concentrations can cause the lawn to yellow or brown in spots. Carefully refill lawn gas tanks and fertilizer spreaders on the sidewalk or driveway to avoid overflow onto the lawn. If spills occur, flood the area promptly with water to dilute.

•Debris: Leaving a tool, kids' toys, piece of wood, or any debris on the lawn can quickly suffocate the grass beneath and cause the lawn to die quickly. Make sure that no items are left on the lawn for an extended period of time. The should be put away in their places.
•Mowing patterns: Running the mower in the same pattern over and over can cause ruts in the grass that lead to damage, so

avoid mowing in the same direction on consecutive cuts. Avoid mowing on very hot days or when the lawn is soggy. Both can cause tracks to form in the lawn.
•Mowers: Dull lawn mower blades can damage lawns, as can mowing too fast. Grass blades can be torn, snapped and more, resulting in brown spots.
•Wildlife: Animals and insects can destroy turf roots. Animals or

insects may feed on the grass from underneath its surface, compromising the lawn's ability to procure nutrients and water. Animals like moles or raccoons may feed on grubs in the lawn, and treating for grubs can alleviate torn-up turf. Lawns can be hearty, but they're also highly susceptible to damage. Understanding the causes of lawn damage can help homeowners protect their lawns.

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How To Plant A Tree For Successful Growth

More sunlight and warm temperatures frequently inspire homeowners to spend more time in the great outdoors during spring and summer. Outdoor projects often top homeowners' to-do lists in spring and summer, with gardens and landscapes taking center stage. Planting more trees around the yard is one popular project that can improve property value and benefit the environment.

WHY PLANT TREES?:
 There are plenty of reasons to plant trees. Trees provide a natural form of shade, reducing air temperature by blocking the sun's rays. This can reduce reliance on air conditioning systems and make it more comfortable to spend time outdoors during the summer. North Carolina State University College of Agriculture & Life Sciences says trees absorb and block noise and reduce glare. They also can trap dust, pollen and smoke. Trees also absorb carbon dioxide and potentially harmful gasses from the air. One large tree can supply a day's worth of oxygen for as many as four people, while also storing 13 pounds of carbon per year.

GETTING STARTED:
 Visit a garden center or nursery and select a tree that will be hardy in your planting zone. Choosing native trees can increase the likelihood that the new tree will adapt to its surroundings. Also, inspect trees to determine if they're healthy before taking them home. Look for evidence of root girdling, which occurs when the roots circle around the perimeter of the container and surround the trunk. Trees should not have any dead or dormant branches. The DIY Network suggests locating the tree where it can thrive. This means selecting a spot that can make it easier for the tree to grow tall and wide. Avoid planting near the house, where roots can crack concrete or asphalt, and always plant away from underground pipes.



PLANTING THE TREE:
 Now it is time to amend the soil. It's not enough to enrich only the soil in the hole where the tree will be placed. Move out into a circular area beyond where the roots will start so that roots can expand and properly anchor the tree. The next method of success is to ensure that the tree has a large enough hole to contain the existing root ball and allow for roots to grow and expand. Better Homes and Gardens experts say to prepare a hole that is two to three times as wide as the root ball of the tree. Treat the root ball gently. If the roots are wrapped in burlap, remove the burlap or push it to the bottom of the hole. Backfill the hole with soil and check that the tree is straight. Stake the tree to help it stay upright and straight until the roots anchor it more effectively. A layer of mulch around the base of the tree can prevent weeds and reduce water loss. Water daily for several weeks until the roots have fanned out. It's best to leave trees be for the first growing season, only removing broken or diseased limbs. Resist pruning and shaping until the tree has survived its first growing season. Learn the right way to plant a tree to improve the landscape and the environment.

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Post-Winter Garden Prep

Lawns and gardens can bear the brunt of winter weather and are often in need of tender loving care by the time spring arrives. Preparing a garden for spring and summer involves assessing any damage that harsh weather might have caused. As temperatures climb, gardeners can heed the following post-winter garden

preparation tips in an effort to ensure some successful gardening in the months ahead. •Assess the damage. Even if winter was mild, gardens might still have suffered some damage. Inspect garden beds and any fencing or barriers designed to keep wildlife from getting into the garden. Before planting

anew, fix any damage that Mother Nature or local wildlife might have caused over the past several months. •Clear debris. Garden beds and surrounding landscapes that survived winter without being damaged might still be littered with debris. Remove fallen leaves, branches and even litter

that blew about on windy winter days before planting season. Make sure to discard any debris effectively so it does not find its way back into the garden. •Turn the greenhouse into a clean house. Spring cleaning is not just for the interior of a home. Cleaning a greenhouse in advance of spring can help gardeners evict any overwintering pests that can threaten plant life once spring gardening season arrives. A thorough cleaning, which should include cleaning the inside of greenhouse glass and washing flower pots and plant trays, also can prevent plant diseases from surviving into spring. •Check for pests. Speak with a local gardening professional to determine if there are any local pests to look out for and how to

recognize and remove these pests from gardens. Pests may hibernate in the soil over the winter, and such unwelcome visitors can make it difficult for gardens to thrive come spring and summer. •Assess plant location. If plants, flowers or gardens have struggled in recent years or never grew especially vibrant, then gardeners may want to assess the location of their plant life before spring gardening season begins. Some plants may not be getting enough sunlight in certain locations on a property, while others might be overexposed to the sun during spring and summer. Moving plants that are not thriving prior to the start of spring gardening season may be just what gardens need to flourish in the coming weeks.



Spring gardening season is right around the corner, so now is an ideal time to prepare gardens for the warmer seasons ahead.

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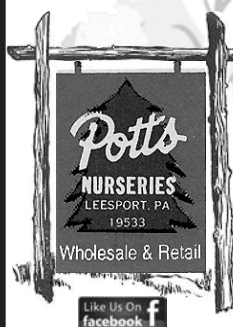
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Avoid Aches & Pains When Gardening

People who have not spent much time in a garden may not consider this rewarding hobby much of a threat to their health. But as veteran gardeners can attest, gardening can contribute to nagging aches and pains that can force even the most ardent green-thumbers indoors. Gardening is a physical activity that, despite its peaceful nature, can be demanding on the body. Thankfully, there are several ways that gardening enthusiasts can prevent the aches and pains that can sometimes pop up after long days in the garden.

- Use ergonomic gardening tools. Ergonomic gardening tools are designed to prevent the types of aches, pains and injuries that can cut gardeners' seasons short. Gardening injuries can affect any area of the body, but injuries or aches and pains affecting the back, wrists and hands are among the most common physical problems gardeners endure. Look for ergonomic tools that reduce the strain on these areas of the body. Even arthritis sufferers who love to garden may find that ergonomic tools make it possible for them to spend more time in their gardens without increasing their risk for injury.
- Alternate tasks. Repetitive-strain injuries can affect gardeners who spend long periods of time performing the same activity in their gardens. By alternating tasks during gardening sessions, gardeners can reduce their risk of

suffering repetitive strain injuries. Alternate tasks not just on muscle groups worked, but also level of difficulty. Remember to include some simple jobs even on busy gardening days so the body gets a break.

- Take frequent breaks. Frequent breaks can help combat the stiffness and muscle aches that may not appear until gardeners finish their gardening sessions. Breaks help to alleviate muscles or joints that can become overtaxed when gardening for long, uninterrupted periods of time. When leaning down or working on your hands and knees, stand up to take breaks every 20 minutes or the moment aches and pains start to make their presence felt.
- Maintain good posture. Back injuries have a tendency to linger, which can keep gardeners indoors and out of their gardens. When gardening, maintain good posture to prevent back injuries. Gardening back braces can protect the back by providing support and making it easier for gardeners to maintain their posture. Tool pouches attached to gardening stools or chairs also can be less taxing on the back than gardening belts tied around the waist. Gardening might not be a contact sport, but it can cause pain if gardeners do not take steps to prevent the onset of muscle aches and strains when spending time in their gardens.

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Chrysanthemums, often referred to as "mums," are among the most popular flowers for autumn plantings and landscape decor. But these hardy, often vividly colored plants are worthy of attention as early as the spring gardening season. Although mums are most often purchased in September and October and cast aside shortly thereafter, the plant that many



Mums Not Exclusive To Fall

people mistake for an annual is actually a perennial, meaning with the proper care it can come back year after year. By planting mums in the spring, gardeners ensure the plants have enough time to develop solid root systems, including their hallmark underground runners that enable them to grow tall and wide and over-winter. While it's best to plant potted mums that were used in fall decorating after the flowers die and before winter sets in, some container plants can still thrive and come back the following year. When cleaning gardens in the spring, do not trash withered mums that may have been stashed behind the shed. Try planting them and you may be surprised that they thrive and rebloom in the garden this year. Remove the dead branches and

dried-up parts of the plant only after new shoots begin to grow. Gardening experts advise planting mums in sunny spots with southern exposure. However, be sure to keep the plants away from artificial lighting, such as streetlamps or garden accent lighting, as mums are short-day plants that bloom only when the hours of darkness are greater than the hours of daylight. Mums that get too much light at night may not bloom to their fullest capacity, or they may be "leggy," with longer stems instead of being compact. Pruning or "pinching" mums in June and July will help keep mums compact as well, resulting in more flowers. Mums desire a rich and moist but well-drained soil. Planted mums will require less water than container plants, but the

ground should never become soggy. Well-watered plants will offer more flowers. Hardy mums work well as edging, in mass groupings to create a shrub-like appearance and even in containers. Thanks to their relative affordability, mums are an inexpensive way to dress up landscapes. Mums are hardy in USDA zones five through nine. Although fall-flowering mums may not be the first plants to come to gardeners' minds at the onset of spring, planning chrysanthemum landscaping now can help ensure beautiful plants when spring and summer flowers begin to wither. Well known for bringing color to autumn landscapes, mums actually are a perennial that can be planted in spring to come back each year.

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Helpful And Harmful Insects

Although it's virtually impossible to count them, insects are the most diverse group of organisms on the planet. Nine hundred thousand different kinds of insects are known to exist. At any given time, it is estimated that there are around 10 quintillion individual insects living. Gardeners grow frustrated when seeing their gardens infested with insects. In an effort to restore their gardens, homeowners might be tempted



to eradicate any bug that moves in their yards. But gardeners would be wise to first learn which insects are hurting their gardens and which can actually help gardens in the long run.

HARMFUL: Certain insects can be dangerous to animals and plants. The following are a handful of insects that can threaten the vitality of gardens.

Aphids: These insects suck on the juice needed to sustain plants, particularly when they congregate.

Bald-faced hornet: Hornets tend to be an aggressive species that can sting repeatedly. Should you find a nest near an entertaining space or garden, it can cause trouble.

Carpenter ants: These ants will burrow into wood causing damage. They may compromise any wooden structure in and around a home.

Locusts: Various species of locust can damage plants and crops due to their voracious appetites.

Treehoppers: These small, green insects mimic the look of leaves, and their appetites can affect crops and gardens.

Red pavement ant: As they feed on all manner of human food, these ants can quickly overtake areas with their staggering numbers and deliver painful bites.

Grasshoppers: Certain grasshoppers, like the red-legged grasshopper, can decimate food crops and transfer parasites to birds when eaten as prey.

Caterpillars: Many caterpillars, the precursor to adult moths, will feed constantly on leaves, stems and other parts of plants. The tobacco hornworm moth caterpillar can damage potato and tomato plants.

HELPFUL: Plants depend on insects to transfer pollen as they forage, and many insects are quite beneficial to have around. While some pollinate, others are predators of other pests.

Antlion: A foe of ants, they'll help eat and control ant popula-

tions and pollinate flowers. They pose no threat to humans, either.

Big dipper firefly: These colorful insects feast on earthworms, slugs and snails during the larval stage. Fireflies add drama to evening gardens with their twinkling lights.

Garden spiders: Although some spiders can be venomous, many are quite handy to have around the garden. They'll help control pest populations that can damage plants and crops.

Dragonflies: These arial artists that zip around the yard are consuming smaller insects that would otherwise pester plants and humans.

Blue-winged wasp: This wasp attacks the larvae of Japanese beetles, helping to control beetle populations. **Bees and butterflies:** Butterflies and bees are some of the best pollinators out there, and each can add whimsy to gardens. Butterflies and other helpful insects, such as bees, pollinate flowers and can keep dangerous pests at bay in the garden.

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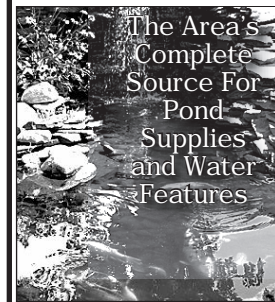
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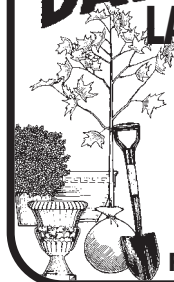
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Stay Safe When Gardening In Hot Weather

Gardening is widely considered as relaxing a hobby as it is rewarding. Although gardening when temperatures are mild, such as in spring and fall, can be relaxing, gardening can be much more physically taxing during the dog days of summer. Gardens need tending even when temperatures outside are especially hot, but gardeners can take steps to protect their health.

• Stay hydrated. Staying hydrated by drinking plenty of water is something gardeners must do to stay safe when gardening in summer. Water carries heat away from internal organs, helping to prevent heat stroke along the way. Water takes heat through the bloodstream to the skin, resulting in sweat. Gardeners who notice they are not sweating despite the heat should drink more water and even head indoors to cool down. In addition, the American Heart Association notes that keeping the body hydrated helps the heart pump blood more easily, making gardening less taxing on the heart on hot days.

• Take frequent breaks indoors or in shady areas. Limit marathon gardening sessions to spring and fall when the weather permits. When gardening in harsh summertime heat, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises gardeners to take frequent breaks. Head inside to air conditioned rooms, if necessary, or better yet, find shady areas to sit, relax and drink some water. Sitting in the shade will give the body's thermostat a chance to recover from exposure to extreme heat.

• Take note of your physical condition. Many people garden alone, so it's important that gardeners learn the symptoms of heat-related illnesses. The CDC notes that elevated body temperatures, headache, rapid pulse, dizziness, nausea, and/or confusion are some common symptoms of heat-related illnesses. Gardeners should go indoors the moment any such symptoms appear.

• Lawncare professionals advise against watering lawns between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. in the summertime, as water is more likely to evaporate during this time, which tends to be the hottest time of the day. Try to do gardening in the early morning hours when the sun is not burning as hot or in late afternoon or early evening hours when temperatures are less threatening.



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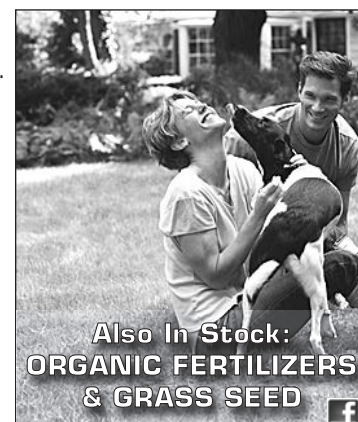
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Design A Garden For All Senses

Gardens add visual appeal to a yard, but gardens also can appeal to individuals' senses of smell, taste, touch, and sound. Gardeners who want to create gardens that appeal to various senses can do so in the following ways.

SIGHT: Aesthetic appeal is one of the most sought-after benefits of gardening. However, many homeowners put in so much effort planting for one particular season that they may not give thought to ensuring the garden looks vibrant no matter the time of year. Gardeners can research planting zones to find plants that will blossom at different times of the year so they can enjoy impressive, aesthetically appealing gardens year-round. Spring bulbs can bloom early on, while annual and perennial summer favorites will thrive under the summer sun. Beautyberry and caryopteris will fill out in the autumn, while holly or mahonia can look lovely in the winter.

SMELL: Gardeners can dot their landscapes with aromatic trees, shrubs and flowers that will make stepping into the garden that much more special. Some of the more fragrant plants include gardenia, dianthus, calendula, lavender, and jasmine. Shrubs such as fragrant pineapple broom, Anne Russell viburnum and Christmas box can add fragrance as well.

SOUND: The lively sounds of the garden are created by the wildlife that come to pollinate and enjoy the environment gardeners have created. By choosing indigenous plants, gardeners can be sure that insects and small critters will seek refuge within the foliage. Songbirds also will add character to a yard. The Audubon Society suggests including a water source and a songbird border of shrubs along your property's edge. Provide food sources and make sure they are located a fair distance from the main action of the yard so as not to scare off birds. Wait for musical chickadees, goldfinches, orioles, and cardinals to arrive and enjoy the accommodations.

TASTE: Gardeners can expand their gardens to include fruit-bearing trees and rows of vegetables. Produce can be harvested from early spring through late fall depending on the crops planted.

TOUCH: Apart from including trees and shrubs of various textures in the garden, look for other ways to stimulate a tactile response. Water features add relaxing sound and beauty. Stones, moss, mulch, and other accents have varied textures that can stimulate the sense of touch in various ways. Don't forget to include a sitting area so that you can immerse yourself fully in the garden.

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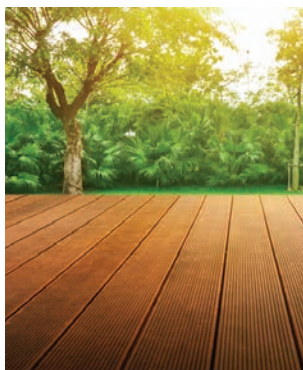
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Composite Decking Can Be A Smart Choice

Decks add character and functionality to a home, increasing outdoor entertaining space and oftentimes improving the resale value of a home. Homeowners have various options when choosing decking materials, but one such option, composite decking, is growing in popularity.



Decks used to primarily be made from pressure-treated lumber. While lumber remains a popular material, more and more homeowners are opting for composite decking products. As anyone who has pressure-washed, stained and sealed wood decks can attest, such spaces require lots of upkeep to

look new year after year. Composite decks require much less maintenance, making them highly attractive to homeowners who would rather spend time using their decks instead of maintaining them.

Composite decking is any type of decking material that is formulated from different recycled materials. The majority of these materials include hard plastic and wood shavings of pulp. Unlike wood, which can fade, crack and rot, composite decking, which has been available for roughly a decade, does not degrade quickly and requires very little upkeep.

Available in a variety of wood colors to match outdoor decor, composite decks also can feature artificial wood grains to make them look similar to wood planks. Although composite decks are not completely impervious to the elements, with some occasional washing to impede mold growth and new technology that has improved stain-resistance, many of the pitfalls of other materials can be avoided with composite decks. Composite decking fits in with eco-friendly lifestyles. The planks are made from recycled materials that would normally end up in landfills. Products

from Trex, a popular composite decking manufacturer, are made from 1.5 million shopping bags and wood mill waste. As composite decks do not rot away and are long-lasting, they will not need to be replaced frequently, which is another eco-friendly benefit.

When comparing composite decking brands, look mainly at the colors, materials used in the composition and the fastening systems. Many are fastened with regular deck screws, offers This Old House. The newer systems have channels for hidden fastening, and the composite deck tiles snap into place. Composite decks do have a few drawbacks. They can be expensive — nearly double the initial cost of wood decks. And although they don't rot, composite planks can scratch. Without refinishing, damaged boards will need to be replaced. Harsh chemicals may fade color and damage the composite materials, so caution is needed. Composite decking remains an in-demand choice for outdoor spaces. Low-maintenance and long-lasting, these decks have quickly become favorites among homeowners. Composite decking can mimic the look of wood, but requires much less maintenance.

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Shade-Tolerant Plants Help To Complete Landscapes

Plants need sunlight to thrive and grow, but some need less sunlight than others. People who find their landscapes are less supportive to sun-loving plants can choose from a variety of shade-tolerant plants, shrubs and trees.

Shade tolerance refers to a plant's ability to withstand low levels of light. Certain plants have adapted this feature to survive in the wild. Plants that grow at the base of forest floors, for example, will get less sunlight than others outside of the tree canopy. Such adaptations enable a wide variety of foliage to grow even though they are not exposed to much sunlight. While sun-loving plants often have broad leaves and expend significant energy to capture sunlight for photosynthesis, shade-tolerant plants expend less energy and tend to be more efficient consumers of soil nutrients and sunlight.

Penn State Extension's Plant and Pests division says the amount of shade a plant is growing under will directly affect the density of the foliage and the plant's flowering and fruiting characteristics. Blending shade-tolerant plants into the landscape can be an effective use of space. Before choosing plants for an existing landscape, it's important to assess the level of shade or sun the plants will receive.

- **Heavy shade:** Heavy shade is when no direct sunlight reaches a plant. This occurs at the base of northern-facing walls or beneath thick tree canopies.
 - **Full sun:** Areas that receive full sun enjoy direct sunlight between six and eight hours per day.
 - **Moderate shade:** These sites have reflected sunlight that may come off of water features.
 - **Light shade:** Plants in these areas will get partially filtered or dappled sunlight.
- Once homeowners understand which type of shade they are dealing with, they can then visit plant nurseries and select their plants. Most greenery comes

with care instructions that include recommendations regarding the amount of shade/sunlight the plant will need to do well. If further assistance is needed, a knowledgeable employee can make suggestions based on landscape needs.

Those who are looking for some preliminary guidance when it comes to selecting shade-tolerant shrubs, plants or trees can consult the following list.

- **Bleeding heart:** Bleeding heart, or Dicentra spectabilis, is typically found in woodlands. It's a perennial in the poppy family that produces mounded foliage and arching vine-like stems of heart-shaped flowers in the spring.
- **Amethyst flower:** Browallia hybrids offer star-shaped blooms of blue and violet. These plants will billow out of hanging baskets or containers, and they

prefer warm shade or filtered sunlight.

- **Coleus:** The coleus, Solenostemon scutellarioides, is another perennial that can have a variety of different leaf colors and striations.

- **Witch hazels:** These are a genus in the family Hamamelidaceae, which has four different species in North America. This shrub or small tree features arching branches with dense, multi-stemmed clumps. Witch hazel produces flowers in the late autumn when most other plants are sparse.

- **Bayberry:** Myrica pensylvanica can grow in partial shade as a hedge or natural property divider. The leaves of this shrub are aromatic when crushed. The shrub will produce tiny, gray/white fruits in late summer.
- **English Ivy:** Also known as Hedera helix, this trailing plant is widely cultivated as an ornamental plant. It will spread easily and can become invasive.

Those searching for shade-tolerant trees can choose among Sugar maple, Black alder, Flowering dogwood, and White spruce, among others.

Shade-tolerant plants can make welcome additions to the landscape, offering greenery and color in the darker areas of a property.

Shade-tolerant plants, such as coleus, can add color and appeal to shady areas of a landscape.



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