

wellnessNEWS

Ideas to help you *LIVE WELL* from the ENCANA WELLNESS CENTRE

Gardening

for the Mind + Body + Soul

(Source: wikipedia.ca)

Gardening is very therapeutic and is a fantastic way to burn a few extra calories. Gardening is the practice of growing plants for their attractive flowers or foliage, and vegetables or fruits for consumption. Gardening is a human activity used to produce edible foods and use plants to beautify their local environmental conditions. It involves an active participation in the growing of plants and tends to be labor intensive.

How to make your garden grow

(Source: www.calgaryplus.ca/portal/feature/65/beginners_garden_grow.jsp)

1. Start with the Soil

Prepare the soil properly. Dig lots of compost and well-rotted manure into your soil. The goal - have a crumbly soil that holds together when you squeeze it in your fist.

2. Compost

Every gardener needs a dependable source of compost, so start a compost bin in your backyard.

3. Evaluate Your Conditions

For a healthy, low-maintenance garden, you'll need to learn as much as you can about your garden's conditions. Spend time observing the light and plant plants according to how much sun they need to thrive.

4. Design your plot

Choose a manageable area to begin with. Before you dig, Outline the shapes of your gardening beds with a flexible hose - experiment with shapes until you get it right.

5. Match Plants to your Conditions

Nursery catalogues, books and magazines are great sources of information about the needs and requirements of garden plants.

6. Group Plants

Think about grouping plants with similar needs together. Consider grouping low-growing plants at the front of your border and taller plants near the back.

7. Go Shopping

Take your list to the nursery. Other good sources of plants include gardening friends, horticultural societies, garden clubs and specialty plant sales.

8. Planting

Dig holes that are about twice the size of each plant's pot, and add some compost or well-rotted manure to the hole. Ease the plants gently out of the pot, loosen the roots, place the plant in the prepared hole, making sure that all the roots are below the ground. Fill in the hole with the excavated soil and more compost, then firmly tamp the soil.

9. Water

As soon as plants are in the ground, water them thoroughly, and continue to do so every few days for a good month.

10. Weeds

Pull weeds up before they go to seeds and before they spread throughout your garden. Make sure you pull out the whole weed, roots included.

11. Enjoy



Basic TOOLS

for every gardener

(Source: markcullen.com)

Hand trowel: the best you can afford. It should feel comfortable in your hand and have a solid shank.

Garden spade: D-handle, rounded digging spade is the most versatile spade. It allows you to move large amounts of dirt and dig borders. It can be used for edging, dividing plants and moving plants.

Pruning shears: these are needed to trim bushes and overgrown perennials, deadhead flowers and prune roses.

Leaf rake: you will find many uses for this throughout the seasons.

Gloves: protect your skin from staining, stings, thorns and blisters with a good pair of gardening gloves.

Fork: useful for turning your compost and moving piles of brush.