



Essential Tips *for Beginning Gardeners*

- Research your hardiness zone and planting schedule for your specific microclimate online. To find your hardiness zone, search "hardiness zone for (your zip code)." Next, find a planting schedule for your location by searching "planting schedule for (your hardiness zone)."
- Cultivate your garden where it will have at least six to eight hours of sunlight (herbs and roses need full sun) and an accessible water source.
- Preparing your soil is the best thing you can do for a bountiful garden. Garden soil needs to be well-drained, fertile, and moisture retentive. You can achieve this by adding organic matter, like compost, manure, peat moss, or soil conditioners.
- Water at least 1 inch into the soil every week (and be sure to water more during the summer months).
- Fertilizing, whether using organic or commercial, is beneficial and can expedite plant growth. Try giving your plants an occasional dose of fish emulsion too, which will add trace elements to the soil, allowing plants to thrive.
- Stay on top of pests with aided control. Visit your local garden center to help identify and select the most appropriate control aids for your garden. There are many organic and commercial options available.
- Keep weeds at bay by first removing all the grass in the beds, then placing down weed fabric, and filling with soil. Add 3 inches of mulch for moisture retention and to keep weeds at bay.