

TERMINOLOGY

BEGINNERS GUIDE TO GARDENING



A - C



Aerate Soil

Acclimation - This is when plants adjust to cooler conditions

Aerate - This is the loosening of compact soil

Aphid - Small sap sucking insects called greenfly and blackfly

Bareroot - Plants that are dug out of the ground in with no soil around the roots.

Biodegradable - A material that can break down naturally in the environment without leaving any harmful residues.

Cane - The stems of a raspberry or blackberry plant

Chitting - Placing seed potatoes in a tray or egg box in a bright, cool but frost-free place to encourage them to sprout prior to planting

Cloche - Structure made of glass, plastic or horticultural fleece placed over a plant for protection or for forcing early crops

Cold frame - Unheated frame for growing hardy and half-hardy plants outdoors

Companion Planting - The practice of planting two or more different species of plants together to provide mutual benefits, such as pest control, nutrient sharing, and shade

Crown - The growing point of a plant from which new shoots emerge

Cultivar - A plant that is bred or selected by growers for unique flowers, leaf colour, growing habit etc. It has distinct and uniform characteristics that differ from the original species



D - H

Deadhead - Removing dead flowers from a plant to encourage new growth and more blooms

Direct Sow - Planting seeds directly into the soil, instead of starting them in a greenhouse

Drought Tolerant - A plant that can survive with minimal water

Earth Up - To draw soil up around a plant to exclude light, protect from frost or encourage roots to develop from the stem

Ericaceous - Used to describe plants that like acid soil and will not tolerate alkaline soils

F1 Hybrid - First generation offspring derived from breeding two distinct pure-bred lines. They are vigorous and uniform plants

Fertiliser - A substance added to soil to provide nutrients that plants need to grow

Fungicide - A substance used to control or prevent fungal diseases in plants.

Germination - The process of a seed sprouting and beginning to grow into a plant.

Grafting - A technique used to join the stem or branch of one plant onto the rootstock of another, typically to produce a stronger or more desirable plant.

Harden Off - The process of gradually acclimating indoor-grown plants to the outdoor environment before transplanting them.

Heirloom - A plant variety that has been passed down from generation to generation and is valued for its history, unique characteristics, and often superior taste.

H - O



Herbaceous Plant - A non-woody perennial plant, often dying back in the winter and becoming dormant by means of underground rootstocks or a woody base. Growth resumes in the spring.

Humus - A dark, organic material formed from decomposed plant and animal matter that is rich in nutrients and beneficial to soil health.

Hybrid - A plant variety that has been created by crossbreeding different plants.

Loopers - A type of pruning tool used for trimming thick branches and stems.

Mulching - The act of adding a layer of organic or inorganic material to the soil surface around plants, to help retain moisture, regulate temperature, and suppress weeds.

Nitrogen Fixation - The process by which certain plants, such as legumes, convert atmospheric nitrogen into a form that can be used by other plants.

Organic - A term used to describe gardening practices that rely on natural methods and materials, such as compost and natural pest control, rather than synthetic chemicals.

Organic Matter - Any substance derived from living or once-living organisms, such as compost, manure, or leaf litter, that contributes to soil fertility and structure.



P - S

Perennial - A plant that lives for several years and typically produces new growth each year from its root system.

pH - A measurement of the acidity or alkalinity of soil, with a range of 1 to 14, with 7 being neutral

Pinching Out - Removing the growing points of a young plant to encourage side-shoots to form. This encourages a bushy habit and more flowering stems

Pollination - The transfer of pollen from the male part of a flower to the female part, which is necessary for many plants to produce fruit.

Propagation - The process of reproducing plants through vegetative or sexual means, such as rooting cuttings, dividing clumps, or planting seeds.

Prune - The process of cutting back or removing dead, damaged, or overgrown branches from a plant to promote healthy growth.

Raised Bed - A gardening method in which plants are grown in beds that are raised above the ground, typically by using wooden boards or bricks.

Rootbound - A condition in which a plant has outgrown its container and its roots have become crowded, potentially causing the plant to wilt or die.

Rootstock - The underground part of a plant containing the roots. In grafting, a plant (scion) is joined to a desirable rootstock – often to promote a dwarfing habit.

Seedling - A young plant grown from a seed, typically just a few inches tall.

S - W



Self-fertile - A plant that does not need pollen from a second individual in order to fertilise and set fruit.

Soil - The mixture of minerals, organic matter, and air that provides the foundation for plant growth.

Specimen Plant - Normally a tree or shrub grown in a prominent position where it can be viewed from different angles.

Thinning - The act of removing some of the plants or seedlings from a crowded bed or container to give the remaining plants more room to grow.

Top Dressing - Applying fertiliser, such as compost, manure or artificial fertiliser, as a mulch on the surface of the soil.

Top Soil - The soil you plant into. It's the most nutritious part of the soil, compared to subsoil, which isn't very nutritious at all.

Vermicomposting - A type of composting that uses worms to decompose organic matter, resulting in a nutrient-rich soil amendment known as worm castings.

Waterlogged - Used to describe plants, usually growing in pots, which are completely submerged in water.

Weed - An unwanted plant that competes with other plants for resources and can be harmful to the garden.



W - Z

Weeding - The act of removing unwanted plants or weeds from a garden bed or container, to reduce competition for resources and improve the health of desired plants.

Wilting - Used to describe plants that have shrunk and collapsed, often due to lack of water, frost or fungal disease.

Xeriscaping - A type of landscaping that uses drought-tolerant plants and other techniques to conserve water

Xylem - The part of a plant's vascular system that transports water and nutrients from the roots to the leaves and stems.

Yellowing - A condition in which a plant's leaves turn yellow, often indicating a nutrient deficiency or other issue.

Yield - The amount of crops or produce that a plant or garden bed produces, typically measured in weight or volume.