

MODULE 7: PLANTING TECHNIQUES FOR DIFFERENT PLANT SPECIES



Ready to get your hands dirty in the garden? Learn how to start a successful garden with these tips and tricks for planting. From choosing the right soil to understanding how to plant different types of plants, we'll show you what you need to know.

Before you start

You must ensure that your garden's conditions are ideal for plant growth before you can begin planting. This includes looking into the conditions in which your plants will need to be planted, making sure you have the right soil for that plant, planning where you will plant, and setting up your planting beds.

Pick the best garden spot

Most flowering plants and vegetables require six to eight hours of daily full sun. Therefore, you must observe your garden during the day to determine which areas receive full sun and which receive partial or full shade. Don't worry if most of your garden is shaded: Tomatoes cannot be grown in the shade, but many other plants, like outdoor ferns and hostas, will thrive.

Choose a relatively flat location for your garden if possible because managing a sloping garden is more challenging, time-consuming, and potentially costly. Furthermore, ensure your new nursery will have simple admittance to a water source.

Pro tip: Suncalc.net allows you to determine your ideal garden position. This lets you know when the sun rises and sets in your area throughout the year.



Check your soil

Your soil may need to be improved before you begin planting because different plants thrive in different soils. First, check the consistency of the soil. Is it sandy, which falls easily through your fingers, or clay, which is sticky and muddy?

Digging heavy clay soil is difficult, so to strengthen the structure, add a lot of compost or well-rotted manure. Organic matter must also be added to boost fertility in sandy or chalky soil. You should also check the pH of your soil. Most plants need a pH of about 6, but some, called ericaceous plants, need more acidity. The pH of your soil can't be easily changed, but you can make an acid-raised bed or container or add acidic compost. The most important thing to remember about soil is to choose plants that will do well in the growing conditions of your plot; it is harder to change the dirt. Lesson 3 contains additional information regarding soil testing: Soil and a few articles' links in the "further reading" section at the end of this lesson.

Make a planting plan

Whether you have a new garden or have created a new bed, you will need to devise a plan for what to plant where. To do this, you can cut out pictures of the plants you want and play around with how to set them out. Make sure to consider the amount of space required by each plant.

Prepare your planting beds

Loosening the soil before sowing or planting in new beds makes it easier for roots to get the water and nutrients they need. There are two approaches: digging by hand or tilling with a mechanical tool like a rototiller. When adding a large number of amendments, the second approach is ideal. However, it is simple to go overboard, resulting in soil structure damage. When it comes to making small beds, digging is more practical.

In either case, only work the soil when it is sufficiently moist to form a loose ball in your fist but sufficiently dry to break apart when dropped. It is more difficult to dig when the soil is too dry, and digging when it is too wet can damage the structure of the soil. Mix in the organic matter as you turn the top six to eight inches of soil with a spade or fork.

Pro tip: Walking on prepared beds compacts the soil, so lay down plywood boards temporarily to evenly distribute your weight.

Activity: Using the above information, look in your garden for the planting conditions and plan what you will be planting.

How to plant

You Will Need:

- Gloves
- Spade
- Watering can/ hose

Planting potted plants

Planting container-grown plants is an easy and convenient way to add beauty and life to your garden or yard. Here's a step-by-step guide for beginners:

1. Choose the right spot

Before planting, choose a spot in your garden with the appropriate sunlight, shade, and drainage required for your plant species. Check the plant's care needs for information on its sun and soil requirements.

2. Prepare the soil

Remove any weeds or debris from the planting area. Then, dig a hole in the soil about twice the size of the plant's root ball. Add organic matter such as compost, peat moss, or aged manure to the hole, improving soil structure and providing the plant with nutrients.



3. Water the plant

Before planting, thoroughly water the container-grown plant, ensuring the soil is well-hydrated. This will help the plant establish roots more easily in the soil.

4. Remove the plant from its container

Turn the container-grown plant upside down and tap the bottom of the pot to loosen the root ball. Gently remove the plant from the container, careful not to damage the roots.

5. Loosen the roots

If the roots are circling around the root ball, gently tease them apart with your fingers. This will encourage the roots to grow outwards into the surrounding soil instead of continuing to grow in a circle.

6. Place the plant in the hole

Set the plant into the hole, ensuring its level with the surrounding soil. Check that the top of the root ball is even with the soil surface.

7. Fill in the hole

Backfill the hole with soil, firming it gently with your hands as you go. Water the plant again to help settle the soil and remove air pockets.

8. Add mulch

Add a layer of mulch, such as shredded bark, to the soil around the plant. Mulch will help retain moisture in the soil and suppress weed growth.

9. Water regularly

Water the newly planted container-grown plant regularly for the first few weeks, making sure the soil stays moist but not waterlogged. This will help the plant establish its roots in the surrounding soil.



Planting bare-root shrubs and trees

Planting bare-root shrubs and trees is an affordable and straightforward way to introduce new plants into your garden or landscape. Here is a step-by-step guide on how to plant bare-root shrubs and trees in the ground:

1. Choose the right spot

First, select a spot with well-drained soil, enough sunlight and space for the root system to spread. Also, please consider the plant's ultimate size at maturity and consider planting it at a distance from other plants and structures.

2. Prepare the soil

Loosen the soil in the area where you plan to plant the tree or shrub to a depth of at least 12 inches. Remove any weeds, rocks, or debris from the area. You may also want to add some organic matter, such as compost, to improve soil fertility.

3. Soak the roots

Place the bare root plant in a bucket of water for a few hours before planting. This will help rehydrate the roots and improve their chances of survival.

4. Dig the hole

Dig a hole that is twice as wide and just as deep as the plant's root system. Be sure to measure the root ball's height before digging so the tree or shrub is planted at the same level as in the nursery or field.

5. Place the plant in the hole

Set the tree or shrub in the hole, ensuring the roots are spread out evenly. Check that the plant is straight and that the graft or bud union (if there is one) is above the soil level.

6. Fill in the hole

Backfill the hole with soil. Ensure the soil is firm enough to support the tree or shrub but not too compacted. Mulch should be spread around the plant's base to keep moisture and prevent weeds.

7. Water the plant

Water the newly planted tree or shrub thoroughly, ensuring the water reaches the roots. Be sure to water regularly during the first few weeks after planting until the plant is established.

8. Stake the tree (if necessary)

If the tree is tall or top-heavy, you may need to stake it to keep it upright. Place the stake in the ground near the trunk and attach the tree to the stake with a soft, flexible material such as tree ties. Be careful not to tie the tree too tightly, as this can damage the bark.



Planting bulbs

Planting flower bulbs is a great way to bring colour and beauty to your garden or outdoor space. Here is a step-by-step guide on how to plant flower bulbs in the ground or container:

1. Choose the right bulbs

Select healthy and firm bulbs with no signs of mould or damage. Consider the bloom time, height, and colour of the flowers, and choose appropriate bulbs for your region and climate. Some bulbs need to be planted in spring or autumn, so it is worth looking into the bulb requirements before planting.

2. Choose the right spot

Select a location that gets plenty of sunlight and has well-draining soil. In the case of planting in a container, choose a pot that is at least 12 inches deep with good drainage holes.

3. Prepare the soil

Loosen the soil in the planting area to a depth of at least 12 inches. Remove any weeds, rocks, or debris from the area. You may also want to add some compost or other organic matter to improve soil fertility.

4. Determine the planting depth

Check the instructions on the bulb package to determine the proper planting depth for the bulbs you have chosen. A general rule of thumb is to plant bulbs at a depth two to three times the bulb's height.

5. Plant the bulbs

Dig a hole or holes in the soil or container deep enough to accommodate the bulb(s) at the proper depth. Place the bulb(s) in the hole(s) with the pointed end facing up. Space multiple bulbs out according to the package instructions or the desired arrangement.



6. Cover the bulbs

Gently fill the hole(s) with soil, not damaging the bulbs. Water the soil well to settle it around the bulbs.

7. Add mulch (optional)

Add a layer of mulch on top of the soil to help retain moisture and regulate soil temperature. Use a lightweight mulch like straw or shredded leaves, and spread it in an even layer about 2 inches deep.

8. Water the bulbs

Water the bulbs well after planting, ensuring the soil is thoroughly moistened. Bulbs generally need about 1 inch of water per week, which may vary depending on your climate and soil conditions.

Add a few crocks to the bottom of the container to aid in drainage if you want to plant bulbs there. After that, add a compost layer. You can plant bulbs in layers, placing varieties that bloom later, like tulips, at the base and varieties that bloom earlier, like crocuses, at the top. It's a great way to save space to plant in this "lasagne" style.

If you are establishing spring bulbs in the ground, you can naturalize them in a yard by uncovering divots and popping them into their own profundity multiple times. Alternatively, you could plant a group a little bit closer to the surface around a tree. Since winter rains may cause rot in some bulbs, adding grit to the hole will help many of them.





Planting in containers

With containers, you can have a lot of fun selecting plants for various seasonal looks and colours. Add a few broken pieces of crockery to the bottom of the container to aid in drainage, which is the golden rule. Mix your compost with some topsoil to prevent drying out too quickly. Plants use compost's nutrients in about six weeks, so supplement with slow-release fertiliser or a liquid feed or tomato feed regularly. Furthermore, plant your containers sparingly; you can always thin them out later.

Pro tip: After planting, be sure to water until the soil is moist, then regularly water the plant to help it establish for the first six months.