



GARDENING

Based on the presentation "Garden Design and Horticulture Therapy for Everyone" by Catherine Alguire and Nancy Easterling

"Though I do not believe that a plant will spring up where no seed has been, I have great faith in a seed. Convince me that you have a seed there, and I am prepared to expect wonders."
— Gardening for All

Getting Started

Gardening is one of the most popular leisure time activities. With many different types and degrees of gardening activity, there is something for every interest and ability level. Whether you prefer indoor or outdoor, large or small scale, there are some common considerations when getting started:

- ? Consider all the ways to garden and decide the best methods given your abilities and interests:
 - ? Raised beds (up to 36" above the ground)
 - ? Raised ground beds (8-10" in height)
 - ? Retaining walls
 - ? Elevated beds (shallow beds on legs)
 - ? Water garden
 - ? Planters, pots, or containers (any size)
 - ? Window boxes
 - ? Hanging baskets
- ? Find out about the plant and soil recommendations and insects for the climate and region where you live. Contact your Cooperative Extension Agent or talk to someone at a local nursery for ideas and recommendations relating to your geographic region.
- ? Your local botanical garden, Cooperative Extension Program, Master Gardener, or community college may have general gardening classes to help you get started.
- ? If you need adapted gardening tools, first locate your local garden center. Many manufactures sell light weight tools with extended handles and enlarged grips to make gardening easier for individuals with different abilities.

Benefits of Gardening

Social Interaction
Peace of Mind
Sense of Ownership
Increases Self Esteem
Sense of Accomplishment
Exercise
Enjoy Outdoors
Increase Flexibility
Increases Concentration

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Adaptation Ideas

The following adaptation ideas and techniques may help you get started, but keep in mind that there are endless ways to adapt tools and design a garden to make it accessible to people with many types of disabilities:

- ? Work in short sessions
- ? Garden in a seated position
- ? Use light-weight tools with various handle lengths depending upon ability to reach
- ? Plant using pots or raised beds
- ? Plan your garden around your ability to access all areas easily

Helpful Hints to Increase Success

Hint #1: Start small and build gradually.

Hint #2: Relate the garden to other activities such as cooking, herb sales, flower arranging, wreath making, or flower pressing.

Hint #3: Consider plants that attract birds and butterflies to establish an ecological balance.

Hint #4: Consider a water source, accessible pathways, adequate sun or shade areas, and places to sit or rest when planning a garden.

Resources

American Horticulture Therapy Association

Center for Horticulture Therapy Studies
909 York Street
Denver, CO 80206
303-331-3862
www.ahta.org

Accessible Gardening for People with Disabilities

Janeen R. Adil (1994)
Woodbine House
800-843-7323

North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service

www.ces.ncsu.edu

North Carolina Botanical Gardens

Nancy Easterling,
CB# 3375, Trotten Center
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3375

The Enabling Garden

Gene Robert (1994)
Taylor Publishing Co.
1550 Mockingbird lane
Dallas, TX 75235