



A Strategic Game for Young Gardeners

The Magic of the Garden

On a sunny Saturday morning, twins Maya and Leo discover an old iron gate hidden behind their grandmother's house. Curious, they push it open and step into an amazing secret: an enormous garden, wild and abandoned, with overgrown paths winding between empty flower beds.

As they walk deeper into the garden, they notice four tall statues standing at the corners - ancient gardeners carved from stone, covered in moss and vines. When Maya reaches out to touch one, something incredible happens: the statues' eyes begin to glow with a soft golden light!

"Welcome, young gardeners," the statues say in unison, their voices like wind through leaves. "We have been waiting for someone with the spark of creativity and the wisdom of strategy. Long ago, this garden was alive with colour and magic, attracting butterflies from all across the land. But the magic has faded, and the butterflies have gone."

The tallest statue, wearing a crown of flowers, continues: "The garden's magic can only be awakened through thoughtful design and clever planning. You must work together - or against each other - to create the most beautiful and strategic layout. Whoever designs with both heart and mind will bring the butterflies back to your town!"

Maya and Leo look at each other with excitement. The garden statues have handed them a special challenge: become master planners and restore the garden's ancient magic!

What's Garden Planters?

Garden Planters is a two-player strategy board game where you and a friend (or sibling, or parent!) become gardeners designing a beautiful community garden. The game is all about smart planning, creative thinking, and out-manoeuvring your opponent - but in a peaceful, garden-themed way!

Think of it like chess meets gardening: your pieces move across the board planting flowers, and the goal is to position them so cleverly that your opponent can't move anymore!

Three Ways to Play

Garden Planters offers three difficulty levels, so you can choose how complex you want the game to be:

Beginner Level

Perfect for first-time players!

- Uses only Sunflowers (15 per player) and Rose Bushes (10 per player)
- Simple blocking mechanics
- Great for learning the basic strategy

Standard Level

The complete classic experience!

- All four flower types: Sunflowers (10), Rose Bushes (5), Lily Ponds (4), Wildflowers (5)
- Wildflowers add flexible placement options
- More tactical variety and depth

Advanced Level

For experienced strategists!

- All four flower types
- Seasonal mechanics that change gameplay every 8 turns
- Special garden features (Fountain, Compost Bin, Scarecrow)
- Maximum strategic complexity

What You'll Need

Essential Items (All Levels):

1. A 10×10 grid board
2. 8 gardener pieces (4 for each player)
3. Paper and pencil for scorekeeping

Flowers (by Level):

- **Beginner:** 30 Sunflowers (15 per player), 20 Rose Bushes (10 per player)
- **Standard/Advanced:** 20 Sunflowers (10 per player), 10 Rose Bushes (5 per player), 8 Lily Ponds (4 per player), 10 Wildflowers (5 per player)

Setup (All Levels)

Set up the board with each player's four gardeners in these starting positions (rows and columns are numbered 0-9):

Player 1	Player 2
Position 1: (0, 3)	Position 1: (0, 6)
Position 2: (3, 0)	Position 2: (3, 9)
Position 3: (6, 0)	Position 3: (6, 9)
Position 4: (9, 3)	Position 4: (9, 6)

Tip: (row, column) means the first number is how far down from the top, and the second number is how far across from the left!

How Gardeners Move

Your gardeners move like queens in chess - they can travel any distance in a straight line:

- Horizontally (left or right)
- Vertically (up or down)
- Diagonally (in any diagonal direction)

Important: Gardeners cannot jump over or land on other gardeners or flowers! They must move to an empty square.

Beginner Level Rules

Your Turn (3 Simple Steps)

4. **MOVE:** Choose one of your gardeners and move it to any empty square in a straight line (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal).
5. **PLANT:** Place ONE flower on the square your gardener just moved FROM.
6. **END:** Your turn is over! Now it's your opponent's turn.

That's it! The game continues with players taking turns until someone can't move any of their gardeners.

Flower Types (Beginner)

Sunflower (×30 total):

- The most common flower
- Blocks the square it's on - gardeners can't move through or land on it
- Attracts yellow butterflies (see Scoring)

Rose Bush (×20 total):

- A powerful blocking flower!
- Blocks the square it's on PLUS all 4 diagonally adjacent squares
- Use strategically to block off large areas
- Attracts red butterflies (see Scoring)

Winning (Beginner)

The game ends when one player cannot move any of their gardeners on their turn.

- The player who CAN'T move loses
- The player who still has moves available WINS!

Scoring (Optional)

After the game ends, count your points:

- Each flower: 1 point
- Connected groups of same flower type: +1 bonus per flower in the group
- Winner (last player able to move): +25 points
- Each mobile gardener at game end: +3 points

Standard Level Rules

Your Turn (3 Simple Steps)

7. **MOVE:** Choose one of your gardeners and move it to any empty square in a straight line (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal).
8. **PLANT:** Place ONE flower on the square your gardener just moved FROM (or adjacent for Wildflowers).
9. **END:** Your turn is over! Now it's your opponent's turn.

Flower Types (Standard)

Sunflower (×20 total):

- The most common flower
- Blocks the square it's on
- Attracts yellow butterflies

Rose Bush (×10 total):

- Blocks the square it's on PLUS all 4 diagonally adjacent squares
- Use strategically to control large areas
- Attracts red butterflies

Lily Pond (×8 total):

- Blocks like a Sunflower
- Attracts blue butterflies

Wildflower (×10 total):

- Flexible placement: Can be placed on the square you moved FROM, OR on any square adjacent to your destination
- Blocks like a Sunflower
- Attracts rainbow butterflies

Winning (Standard)

The game ends when one player cannot move any of their gardeners on their turn.

- The player who CAN'T move loses
- The player who still has moves available WINS!

Butterfly Scoring

After the game ends, count your points:

- Each flower: 1 point
- Connected groups of same-colored flowers: +1 bonus per flower in the group

- Rainbow Garden bonus: If you have all 4 flower colors touching each other in a 2×2 area, +10 bonus points!
- Winner (last player able to move): +25 points
- Each mobile gardener at game end: +3 points

Advanced Level Rules

Advanced level includes all Standard level rules PLUS seasonal mechanics and special garden features!

The Four Seasons

The garden changes through the seasons! Count the turns and apply these special rules:

Spring (Turns 1-8): Normal Play

Everything works exactly like Standard level. Place your flower on the square your gardener just moved from (or adjacent for Wildflowers). It's planting season - get your garden started!

Summer (Turns 9-16): Sunflowers Bloom!

Sunflowers grow bigger in the summer heat! Each Sunflower now blocks its own square PLUS the 4 squares directly adjacent (up, down, left, right). This makes the board fill up faster!

Autumn (Turns 17-24): Long-Range Planting

The cool weather gives you more planting options! You can place your flower on the square you moved FROM, OR on any square adjacent to where your gardener moved TO (your choice of up to 9 total squares). This adds a new strategic challenge!

Winter (Turn 25+): Rose Bush Jumping

In the quiet winter, gardeners can carefully navigate thorny bushes. Once per turn, your gardener can jump over a Rose Bush (but not land on it). This can create surprise escape routes!

Garden Features

Each player can use each feature once per game:

Fountain:

Once per game, instead of your normal move, teleport one of your gardeners to any square within 2 spaces of the center (5,5).

Compost Bin:

Once per game, declare that you're using the Compost Bin. Your next 2 flowers can be ANY type (even if you've run out of that type).

Scarecrow:

Once per game, after you plant your flower, activate the Scarecrow. Your opponent must place their next flower at least 3 squares away from ALL their gardeners. Tricky!

Winning & Scoring (Advanced)

Same as Standard level - includes all four flower types and Rainbow Garden bonus!

Example Game: First 5 Turns

Let's watch Maya (Player 1) and Leo (Player 2) play the first few turns in Standard level to see how the game works!

Turn 1 - Maya's Move

- Maya moves her gardener from (0,3) to (2,3) - moving 2 squares down
- She plants a Sunflower at (0,3) - the square she just moved from

Strategy: Maya plants where she was standing, beginning to block the top area!

Turn 2 - Leo's Move

- Leo moves his gardener from (0,6) to (2,6) - also moving down
- He plants a Rose Bush at (0,6) - the square he just moved from

Strategy: Smart! The Rose Bush at (0,6) blocks that square PLUS the 4 diagonal squares around it!

Turn 3 - Maya's Move

- Maya moves her gardener from (3,0) to (3,2) - moving 2 squares right
- She plants a Sunflower at (3,0) - the square she just moved from

Strategy: Blocking the left edge of the board.

Turn 4 - Leo's Move

- Leo moves his gardener from (3,9) diagonally to (5,7)
- He plants a Lily Pond at (3,9) - the square he just moved from

Strategy: Leo blocks the right edge and earns a Lily Pond for bonus points!

Turn 5 - Maya's Move

- Maya moves her gardener from (6,0) to (6,3)
- She plants a Wildflower at (6,0) - the square she just moved from

Strategy: Maya is blocking the left edge further down!

The game continues like this, with each player trying to position their gardeners cleverly while blocking their opponent's moves. The tension builds as the board fills up with flowers!

Strategy Tips for Beginners

1. Control the Centre

The middle squares (around (5,5)) give your gardeners the most options for future moves. Try to claim this area early!

2. Use Rose Bushes Wisely

Rose Bushes are powerful because they block 5 squares total! Save them for important moments when you want to cut off a large section of the board or trap an opponent's gardener.

3. Keep Your Gardeners Spread Out

If all your gardeners cluster together, you'll run out of moves quickly! Try to keep them in different areas of the board so you always have options.

4. Think Two Moves Ahead

Before you move, ask yourself: 'Where can my opponent move next?' and 'Will my gardener have anywhere to go on my next turn?' Planning ahead helps you avoid getting stuck!

5. Watch for Trap Opportunities

Sometimes you can surround one of your opponent's gardeners with flowers, cutting off all their escape routes. This is like capturing a piece in chess!

6. Use Wildflowers Strategically (Standard/Advanced)

Wildflowers' flexible placement makes them perfect for blocking unexpected squares or creating emergency defensive positions!

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I move a gardener zero squares (stay in place)?

A: No! You must move to a different square if you have any legal moves available. If none of your gardeners can move to a different square, you lose.

Q: Can I plant a flower right next to a gardener?

A: You can plant a flower on any EMPTY square, even right next to gardeners. But you cannot plant a flower on a square that has a gardener or another flower on it.

Q: What if I run out of one type of flower?

A: If you're out of a flower type, you can't place it anymore - choose a different type! This is why it's important to manage your flowers wisely. (Exception: Advanced level Compost Bin feature lets you place any type!)

Q: Can a Rose Bush block another Rose Bush?

A: Yes! Once a Rose Bush is placed, it blocks its square and the 4 diagonal squares. Other flowers can still be placed on the board (in non-blocked squares), but those blocked squares become off-limits for gardeners to move through.

Q: In Advanced mode, when does each season start?

A: Spring = Turns 1-8, Summer = Turns 9-16, Autumn = Turns 17-24, Winter = Turn 25 onwards. Track your turn count!

Q: What if both players still have moves but we want to end the game?

A: You can agree to end the game and use the scoring system - whoever has more points wins!

Ready to Restore the Garden?

Now that you know how to play Garden Planters at all three difficulty levels, it's time to awaken the magic! Will you start with Beginner level to learn the basics, master Standard level with all four flower types, or dive into Advanced level with seasons and special features?

Remember what the garden statues said: the magic comes from both creativity and strategy. Think carefully, plan ahead, and most importantly - have fun! Every game is a new adventure in garden design.

Good luck, young gardeners. May your designs be clever and your butterflies plentiful!

