

Introduction to Gardening Basics

Objective:

To provide beginners with foundational knowledge and skills for starting a garden.

Lesson 1: Getting Started with Gardening

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the benefits of gardening.
- Learn essential tools and supplies needed for gardening.
- Gain awareness of common gardening challenges and their solutions.

Content:

Benefits of gardening:

- Health benefits.
- Environmental benefits.
- Enjoyment and stress relief.

Essential gardening tools:

- 1 Hand trowel, 1 pruners, 1 watering can, 1 pair of gloves.
- Basic soil testing kits.
- Seed starting trays/pots.
- Pest control methods (e.g., using neem oil, companion planting).
- Nutrient deficiencies and soil amendment techniques.

Activity:

- Create a list of gardening tools needed for a small garden and explain their uses. Discuss how to identify and address common gardening challenges.
- You'll encounter multiple-choice questions covering the benefits of gardening, essential gardening tools, and common gardening challenges.
- Get ready to answer true/false questions to check your understanding of why gardening tools are important and the benefits of gardening.
- Reflection activity about the benefits of gardening and potential challenges faced by beginners.

- **Hands-On Activity:** Set up a small demonstration station with the essential gardening tools listed. Allow learners to handle and discuss each tool's purpose and usage.
 - **DIY Project:** Assign learners to create a simple gardening tool holder or organizer using household materials, emphasizing the importance of tool care and organization.
-

Lesson 2: Understanding Soil and Planting

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about different types of soil and their characteristics.
- Understand basic planting techniques.

Content:

Types of soil:

- Clay, sandy, loamy soil.
- Importance of soil structure and pH.



Planting basics:

- Choosing the right location (sunlight, drainage).
- Digging and preparing soil beds.
- Planting seeds or seedlings.

Activity:

- Conduct a simple soil texture test using a jar and soil samples from different areas.
 - Challenge yourself with a matching activity where you'll pair descriptions of soil types (like sandy, clay, loamy) with their correct names.
 - Test your knowledge of soil-related concepts with true/false questions covering soil structure, pH, and the importance of planting depth.
 - Reflection activity about how soil type impacts plant growth and what considerations are important when selecting a planting location.
 - **Hands-On Activity:** Instruct learners to conduct the soil texture test using jars and soil samples. Guide them through the process of analyzing soil types.
 - **DIY Project:** Encourage learners to create a small raised bed or container garden using different soil types (clay, sandy, loamy) to observe how plant growth varies.
-

Lesson 3: Watering and Maintenance

Learning Objectives:

- Understand watering requirements for different plants.
- Learn basic maintenance practices.

Content:

Watering guidelines:

- Importance of watering frequency and amount.
- Watering techniques (e.g., at the base of plants).

Garden maintenance:

- Weeding, mulching, and pruning.
 - Weeding: Removing unwanted plants or weeds from a garden or landscape to promote the growth of desired plants and maintain a tidy appearance.
 - Mulching: Adding a layer of material (like wood chips, straw, or compost) around plants to conserve moisture, suppress weed growth, and improve soil health.
 - Pruning: Trimming or cutting back branches or parts of plants to improve their shape, promote healthy growth, and remove dead or damaged sections.
- Pest and disease management (basic prevention and treatment).



How To Plant A Tree | PlantingTree™



Plant Watering Basics | The Different Plant Watering Methods and Types of Water

Activity:

- Develop a watering schedule for common garden plants based on their needs.
- Answer multiple-choice questions on watering guidelines, garden maintenance practices, and strategies for pest management.
- Put your problem-solving skills to the test with scenario-based questions related to identifying and solving common gardening issues.
- Reflection activity to consider the challenges of maintaining a garden, such as balancing watering needs with other maintenance tasks.
- **Hands-On Activity:** Have learners create a watering schedule for potted plants or a small garden area, considering different plant types and their watering needs.
- **DIY Project:** Guide learners to build a DIY drip irrigation system using readily available materials to demonstrate efficient watering techniques.

Lesson 4: Introduction to Common Garden Plants

Learning Objectives:

- Identify and understand common garden plants.
- Learn about different plant categories (annuals, perennials, vegetables).

Content:

Common garden plants:

- Flowers: roses, marigolds, petunias.
- Vegetables: tomatoes, peppers, lettuce.
- Herbs: basil, rosemary, mint.

Plant categories:

- Annuals vs. perennials.
- Growing season and care differences.

Activity:

- Create a simple plant identification guide with pictures and basic care instructions.
 - Engage in a fun matching activity where you'll pair garden plants with their correct categories (annual or perennial).
 - Test your knowledge with true/false questions on different garden plants and their specific care requirements.
 - Reflection activity on the importance of choosing appropriate plants for a beginner's garden and how different categories of plants require varied care
 - **Hands-On Activity:** Organize a plant identification walk in a local garden or park, allowing learners to identify common garden plants in person.
 - **DIY Project:** Task learners with creating seedling starter trays using recycled materials, reinforcing the concept of plant categories (annuals vs. perennials).
-

Lesson 5: Harvesting and Enjoying Your Garden

Learning Objectives:

- Understand when and how to harvest garden produce.
- Explore ways to enjoy the fruits of gardening.

Content:

Harvesting guidelines:

- Signs of readiness for different vegetables and herbs.
- Proper harvesting techniques to encourage continuous growth.

Garden enjoyment:

- Cooking with fresh garden produce.
- Sharing surplus harvest with friends and neighbors.

Activity:

- Plan a mini harvest celebration where participants bring dishes made with garden produce.
 - Answer multiple-choice questions about harvesting guidelines and creative ways to enjoy the produce from your garden.
 - Use your gardening expertise to solve scenario-based questions on proper harvesting techniques and using garden produce effectively.
 - Reflection activity on the satisfaction of harvesting and the joys of using homegrown produce in cooking.
 - **Hands-On Activity:** Organize a group harvesting session followed by a cooking workshop using freshly picked produce.
 - **DIY Project:** Have learners make simple plant supports or trellises for vine vegetables, promoting creativity and practical skills.
-

Lesson 6: Safety Practices in Gardening

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the importance of safety measures in gardening.
- Learn key safety practices to prevent injuries and health risks.

Content:

Gardening, while rewarding, involves certain risks. Practicing safety measures can help ensure an enjoyable and injury-free experience.

Protective Gear:

- Wear appropriate clothing, including long sleeves, pants, closed-toe shoes, and gardening gloves to protect against cuts, scratches, and exposure to irritants.
- Use hats and sunscreen to shield yourself from the sun's harmful rays.

Tool Safety:

- Handle tools with care; keep blades sharp and clean.
- Store tools properly to avoid tripping hazards.
- When not in use, store sharp tools in a safe place, out of reach of children.

Chemical Handling:

- Read and follow label instructions when using fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides.
- Store chemicals in their original containers, away from food and out of reach of children and pets.
- Consider using organic or natural alternatives to minimize chemical exposure.

Lifting and Posture:

- Lift heavy objects properly, bending your knees and keeping your back straight.
- Avoid overexertion by taking breaks and staying hydrated.

Awareness of Plants:

- Be aware of potential hazards from toxic plants; research the plants in your garden.
- Wash hands thoroughly after gardening, especially before eating.

Activity:

- Conduct a demonstration on proper tool handling and lifting techniques.
- Identify common toxic plants and discuss safety measures around them.
- Test your understanding of safety measures with true/false questions covering protective gear, tool handling, and chemical safety.
- Practice decision-making skills with scenario-based questions that require you to identify safe practices in different gardening situations.
- Reflection activity to emphasize the importance of safety in gardening and how it impacts one's gardening experience.
- **Hands-On Activity:** Conduct a live demonstration on proper tool handling and safe lifting techniques.
- **DIY Project:** Guide learners to create homemade natural pest control solutions (like companion planting or DIY insect traps) to address common garden challenges.

Lesson 7: Companion Planting and Beneficial Insect Species

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the concept of companion planting and its benefits in gardening.
- Learn about beneficial insect species and their role in pest control and pollination.

Content:

Companion planting:

- Definition and benefits (e.g., pest control, improved growth, biodiversity).
- Examples of beneficial plant combinations (e.g., marigolds with tomatoes, basil with peppers).
- Companion planting charts and resources for reference.

Beneficial insect species:

- Identification of common beneficial insects (e.g., ladybugs, lacewings, hoverflies).
- Roles of beneficial insects in pest management and pollination.
- Creating habitats to attract and support beneficial insects.

Activity:

- Create a companion planting plan for a small garden bed, considering pest-repelling and mutually beneficial plant combinations.
- Identify pictures of beneficial insects and describe their roles in a garden ecosystem.
- Answer multiple-choice questions on the benefits of companion planting and the importance of beneficial insects in sustainable gardening practices.
- Reflection activity on the ecological benefits of companion planting and the role of beneficial insects in sustainable gardening.
- **Hands-On Activity:** Assign learners to design and implement a small companion planting layout in a shared garden space or their own backyard.
- **DIY Project:** Encourage learners to construct simple insect hotels or habitats for beneficial insects using natural materials.

Conclusion:

For deeper exploration of gardening topics beyond this introductory course, here are some recommended books, websites, and organizations that can enhance your understanding and skills:

Books:

"The Vegetable Gardener's Bible" by Edward C. Smith

- An excellent guide covering all aspects of vegetable gardening, from soil preparation to harvesting, suitable for beginners and seasoned gardeners alike.

"The Well-Tended Perennial Garden" by Tracy DiSabato-Aust

- A comprehensive resource on perennial gardening techniques, including plant selection, maintenance, and design tips.

"Rodale's Ultimate Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening" by Fern Marshall Bradley

- A classic reference for organic gardening methods, featuring detailed advice on soil health, pest control, and sustainable practices.

Websites:

National Gardening Association (Garden.org)

- A valuable online resource offering articles, forums, and guides covering a wide range of gardening topics, including plant care, landscaping, and seasonal tips.

Dave's Garden (DavesGarden.com)

- A community-driven platform with plant databases, gardening forums, and user-submitted garden photos and tips.

Fine Gardening (FineGardening.com)

- Provides expert advice on plant care, design inspiration, and practical gardening techniques through articles, videos, and plant guides.

Organizations:

American Horticultural Society (AHSonline.org)

- Offers educational programs, gardening resources, and access to horticultural events for gardening enthusiasts of all levels.

Royal Horticultural Society (RHS.org.uk)

- Based in the UK but with global influence, RHS provides gardening advice, plant information, and resources for both amateur and professional gardeners.

Master Gardener Programs

- Many local universities or cooperative extension offices offer Master Gardener programs that provide in-depth training and resources for gardening enthusiasts.

These resources will complement your introductory knowledge and offer deeper insights into specific gardening topics, advanced techniques, and ongoing learning opportunities.