

Organize your Gardening and Enjoy the Process



Finding the time and energy to garden has been a challenge for me in the past few years. Our property seems to be getting bigger or am I getting older? Regardless of the reason, I'm not willing to give up the great exercise and satisfaction I get from planting my garden, so I need to get more organized to get it done. I also have to be satisfied with an hour or two here and there instead of a full day of gardening. After I planted my garden last year, I took pictures of the planters and the gardens and made a list of the plants I bought at the local nurseries. This process has made it easier to get started each year.

Our garden shed was built on top of an old outhouse and frankly it could withstand a hurricane. It has a waist high counter and wooden shelving. We used leftover linoleum flooring from the kitchen for the floor. It's just the right size to hold the following:

- gardening gloves and ball caps in a closed plastic container
- small gardening tools-stored in plastic carrier or basket with a handle
- garden planters
- folding lawn furniture stored under the counter
- gazing ball and stone statues for the garden
- rod iron poles for hanging baskets, plant and tomato stakes, and long tools (small shovel, rake, edger)-stored in 5 gallon plastic bucket with metal part up
- items to decorate my screened-in porch for the summer
- leftover potting soil in 5 gallon plastic bucket with a lid

In the spring:

- Use 5 gallon plastic bucket with handle to pull out weeds.
- Pull everything out of the shed and sweep it out (mice and chipmunks have made their winter homes in my shed).
- Take plants out of the garden that died over the winter.
- Throw out older seeds and bulbs that didn't make the winter.
- Divide perennial plants if too big and share with neighbors or replant in other parts of the property.
- Move other plants around to fill in where plants died or didn't come up.
- Using pictures from last year, I bought plants and vegetables and planted the planters and the gardens.

In the fall after the first killing frost:

- Fall is for planting, so buy perennials on sale and fill in where plants didn't live.
- Don't forget to call 811 before you dig too deep to prevent damage to electric lines and natural gas pipelines.
- Wash out the planters and store in shed.
- Store leftover seeds and bulbs in metal containers.
- Donate any ceramic planters or recycle plastic containers you didn't use.

After plants have been hit by frost, I like to fill in with fall décor so it doesn't look so empty. I use some of the more colorful pots I emptied to hold mums and fill in with straw bales, pumpkins, cornstalks and gourds. Organize your gardening so it's a pleasure, not a chore.

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