



GARDEN PLANNING GUIDE

Welcome to your best garden yet!



Garden Planning Guide

Welcome to your best garden yet!

Let's get you planning a garden that's as romantic as productive.

As full of beauty as soil life.

As sustainable as enjoyable.

You might be raring to get pen to paper, but first- let's take a step back and ask:

First, what are YOUR goals?

Growing fresh salads

Canning up salsa

Growing a little of everything

Making family memories

Setting an intention up front (knowing it will change with/in the seasons) can be so helpful later in the planning process. The most important thing is to not to compare your gardens or goals to anyone else's.

Nature keeps growing and you will too, so starting small and manageable will ensure your gardening journey is sustainable too!

Now it's time to grab a pen and LET'S DIG IN!

CLICK HERE TO WATCH OUR FREE VEGETABLE GARDEN DESIGN CLASS ON YOUTUBE!

Helping People Dig Their Food!

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AT A GLANCE TIPS:

GROW WHAT YOU LOVE

Think about your favorite meals and what you love to buy fresh from the farmers markets. Start a list of the fruits and vegetables you love and check if they will be happy in your grow zone.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

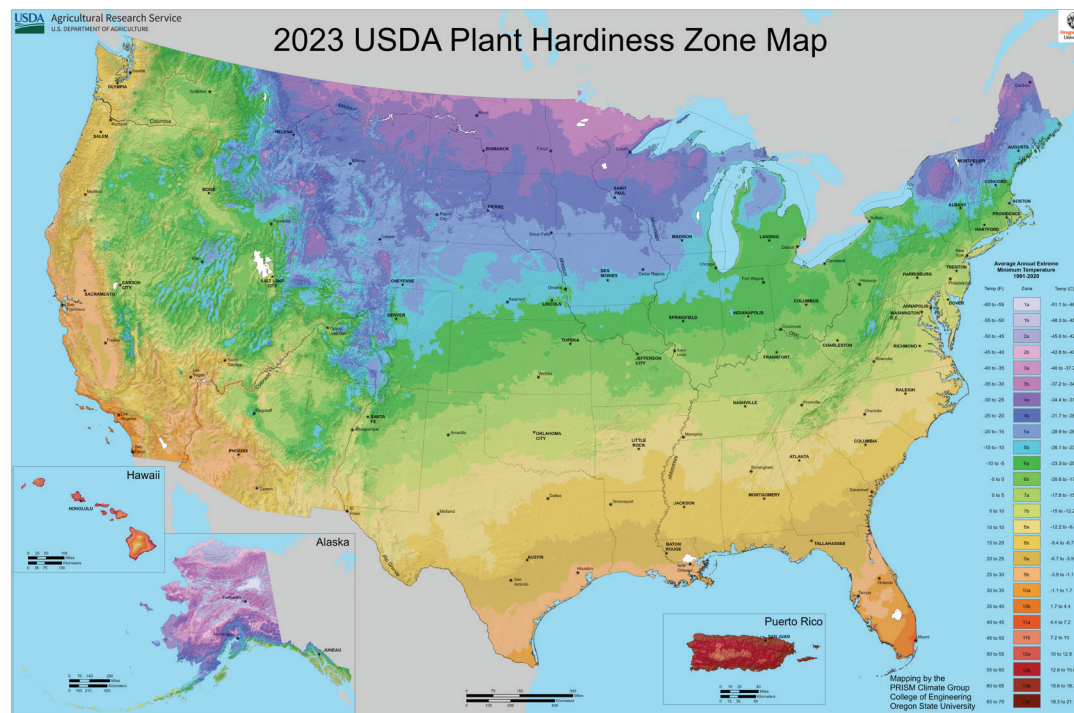
#811 is the national number to call to request that all buried utilities be marked before you start digging. Plan to give them a few days lead time to mark buried electrical, cable and water lines.

WATER AWARENESS

Remember you'll have to water what you plant, likely many times each season. Plan for easy watering up front and your August self will thank you!

KNOW YOUR GROW ZONE

Follow [THIS LINK](#) to find your USDA Plant Hardiness Zone.



Notes

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THE BASICS:

All Vegetable Gardens Need Sun + Water + Healthy Soil (and probably fencing)

LOCATION IS KEY

Most vegetable garden plants want at least 8 hours of sunlight a day, so try to find a spot (even when the trees are leafed out) with 8-10 hours of sunlight. Keep in mind where your water is coming from and going to, as most vegetable plants want about 1" of water a week. The state of the soil is important too, so doing a [soil test](#) or just noticing if other things like to grow there gives you an idea as well. More on building soil [HERE](#).

Leave space for paths as well.

CONSIDER THE DIFFERENT GARDEN STYLES:

IN GROUND

STRAW BALE

RAISED BEDS

EDIBLE LANDSCAPING

CONTAINER

NO DIG



Start Laying Out Your Garden

Finally, it's time to measure your area, grab some graph paper and start sketching.

- Make beds at most 4 feet wide, and keeping at least 2 feet wide paths.
- Find space for the heat loving crops in the sunniest spots.
- Make sure to keep in mind direction of sun – keeping taller plants on the north end of the garden, and garden beds.
- Consider incorporating some vertical garden features like trellises or arbors to grow even more in the space.
- Place shade-loving plants in shade created by bigger plants in the garden, or on the shady end of the garden.
- [Plan space for companion flowers](#) to help with pest defense too. Flowers add beauty, pollinators, habitat and joy to any vegetable garden.
- Consider the rest of the ecosystem when garden planning, see your garden as part of nature and work with it instead of against it.

GARDEN MATH

How much soil do you need to fill a raised bed?

Different soils will settle differently, but a general calculation is:

1 cubic yard of soil will fill a 4'x8' raised bed about 10" deep.

Garden Bed Designs

I'll leave you with some pre-designed garden beds. Stephanie Thurow, my coauthor for [Small-Scale Homesteading](#) colored these in beautifully and brought the designs to life!

These are Vegetable Garden Designs for a typical 4'x8' bed to get you thinking about how to design your own gardens or use any of these plans as is. All plans are designed with north at the top of the drawings. We're using square foot garden spacing for these designs.

FULL TABLE GARDEN BED DESIGN



CUCUMBERS on Trellis – 4 to 5

NASTURTIUM on back corners

BUSH BEANS with 6" spacing
(succession plant Carrots after harvest)

KALE – 3
Interplant with Lettuces and/or Radishes

BROCCOLI – 3
Interplant with Lettuces and/or Radishes

CABBAGES – 3
Interplant with Lettuces and/or Radishes

Left: **BEETS** – 18

Right: **KOHLRABI** – 8 to 12
(succession plant more of the same after harvesting)

Left: **ONIONS** – 18

Right: **CELERY** – 4

PEPPERS – 3

NASTURTIUM in the corners

FALL HARVEST GARDEN BED DESIGN



Left: **POLE BEANS** Teepee

Right: **COSMOS** at the back

KALE – 2 (or 1 Brussel Sprout)

LEEKS – 18

POTATOES – 18

CABBAGE – 3

CARROTS – 64

SWEET ALYSSUM on edges

ONIONS – 27

WINTER SQUASH on corners

SWEET ALYSSUM at front

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SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE GARDEN BED DESIGN



TOMATOES on Trellis – 3

NASTURTIUM on back corners

ALTERNATE BASIL + CELERY – 3 of each

CARROTS – 64

LETTUCE – 12

(keep sowing every 2 weeks)

BUSH BEANS – 16

SNAP PEAS on Trellis – 16

(or more Bush Beans)

ONIONS – 36

PAK CHOI – 2 in middle

SUMMER SQUASH – 2 on edges

SAGE + ROSEMARY – 1 of each

NASTURTIUM – 3 to 4 along front



If you have questions or comments, please feel free to reach out via Instagram, Facebook or email. We are in this together!

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