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| **Growing a Vegetable Garden** |  |

**Pick the Right Location Getting Started**

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| * Plant in a sunny location
	+ At least 6 hours of direct sunlight per day
	+ Some leafy vegetable will tolerate some shade
* Plant in moist, well-drained soil
	+ Avoid locations where there is puddling
* Choose a garden size you can handle
* Plan how to arrange your garden
	+ Ensure enough space between seedlings for full grown vegetables
 |  | * Plant after all danger of frost is gone
	+ After May 15
* If planting from seed read the seed packets
	+ Seed depth
	+ Germination days
	+ Weeks indoors
	+ Maturation days
* Choose a location that the hose or sprinkler can reach
* Choose vegetables you will actually eat
 |

**Prepare Your Soil Efficient Use of Space – Raised Gardens**

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| * If planting in the ground
	+ Add compost to the soil each year
	+ Make sure the plants have enough nutrients to grow
* If planting in raised gardens
	+ Use a mixture of compost and organic matter for fertility and good soil structure
	+ Compost, shredded leaves, aged animal manures, cover crops
 |   | * Good for growing small plots of vegetables
* 2-4 ft. wide; usually 6”-8” above grade
* Prevent soil compaction & erosion
* Better drainage in areas with clay soils
* Don’t have to plant in rows; can increase yield per sq. ft.
* Disadvantage
	+ Dries out quickly in hot dry weather
 |

**Easy Vegetables to Grow** **Seeds** **Seedlings**

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| Tomatoes LettuceZucchini squash BeetsPeppers CarrotsCabbage Spinach or KaleGreen beans Radishes | * Plant seeds at the recommended Depth and spacing on packet
* Tamp down lightly on the soil for good seed to soil contact
* Keep moist with daily water until established
 | * Fertilize after planting and keep moist with daily watering until established
 |

**Growing Vertically Types of Vertical Supports**

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| Put vertical supports in garden during initial planting - avoid damaging plant roots * Crops for Growing Vertically
	+ Beans
	+ Cucumbers
	+ Melons (not watermelon)
	+ Peas
	+ Summer squash
	+ Tomatoes
	+ Winter squash
 |   | * Reduce the amount of ground space needed to grow certain vegetables
* Improve the appearance – fruits will grow longer and straighter with the pull of gravity
	+ Trellis, netting, or fence
	+ Wire or wooden cages
	+ Teepees and tripods.
	+ A-frame
	+ Poles and posts
 |

**Interplanting Interplanting with Flowers and Herbs**

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| A multiple cropping practice involving growing two or more crops in proximity **To make the most of your garden space*** Grow fast-growing vegetables between slower-growing vegetables
* Grow deep rooted vegetables next to shallow rooted vegetables
* Alternate spring, summer, and autumn crops so you can successively harvest different veggies
 |   | Adding flowers and herbs to a vegetable garden makes it more difficult for pests to find your veggies* Marigolds – a favorite companion in Veggie Gardens
* Nasturtiums –are eaten by the pest rather than the vegetables
	+ an edible flower great in salads
* Herbs – can enhance the flavor of vegetables and attract beneficial insects
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**Succession Planting – A Continuous Harvest Gardening Tips**

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| Succession Planting is repeatedly seeding small amounts throughout the season or planting varieties that mature at different times.* Plant a few seeds or transplants at time throughout the growing season
* Early spring - cold hardy greens and peas
* Early summer – heat loving plants, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant
* Midsummer through mid-fall – frost hearty crops

Keep cleaning out beds as you harvest crops to make room for new vegetable that will take their place  |   | * Pesticides sprayed on plants will make its way into the soil
	+ Can kill beneficial insects and microorganisms living there
* Synthetic fertilizers contain salt
	+ Can kill the soil residents
	+ Can build up in soil and possibly harm plants
* Fertilizers can burn plant leaves and roots, and reduce fruiting
* Water the roots, not the leaves
* Use drip irrigation when possible to save water
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**Home and Garden Information Center (HGIC)**

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| University of Maryland Extension provides science-based gardening information through their **Home and Garden Information Center:** <https://extension.umd.edu/programs/environment-natural-resources/program-areas/home-and-garden-information-center>Questions are answered through email via the “**Ask Extension**” tab: <https://extension.umd.edu/programs/environment-natural-resources/program-areas/home-and-garden-information-center/ask-extension> The HGIC webpage titled **Food Gardening** contains guidance for growing a vegetable garden and a chart for planting times.<https://extension.umd.edu/programs/environment-natural-resources/program-areas/home-and-garden-information-center/food-gardening>Planting calendar:[https://extension.umd.edu/resource/when-plant-vegetables-Maryland](https://extension.umd.edu/resource/when-plant-vegetables-maryland) |

**Fertilization Fertilization**

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| The HGIC has an article on Soil Testing and Soil Testing Labs<https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/topics/soil-testing-and-soil-testing-labs>* Don’t fertilize if rain is forecast in the next 24 hours
* Vegetable crops generally need nutrients most when
	+ getting established
	+ during flowering and fruiting
* Follow label directions of selected fertilizer
 |   | * Organic plant foods are slow releasing
* Feeds your plants all season long
* Water-soluble fertilizer
* Need to have garden well-watered before applying
* Good for new seedlings and transplants
* Suggestions
* Apply fertilizer sparingly when initially planting seedlings – tender roots
* Fertilize as required during the rest of the growth cycle
* Mix dry fertilizers into the top 2-4 inches of soil - then water
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**Disease & Pest Management Organic Mulches**

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| **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)**A process you can use to solve pest problems while minimizing risks to people and the environment* Attracting natural enemies
* planting disease-resistant varieties
* Using approaches to prevent problems and control pests and diseases at acceptable levels
 |   | * Prevent weed growth
* Moderate soil temperatures
* Conserve soil moisture
* Add to soil organic matter
* Should be spread after soil warms up
* Can provide habitat for pests along with beneficial critters
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**Harvest Your Garden Maintain Soil in Winter**

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| * When garden begins to produce harvest promptly
	+ Prevents vegetables from rotting
* Crops left on the ground attract pests
* Throw vegetable waste in a compost pile
	+ Do not leave it on the ground
* At end of season –Clean up garden
	+ Don’t leave debris that insects can use for nesting
	+ Cover with compost, mulch, or a cover crop
 |   | * Green ‘manure’ cover crops
	+ improve soil structure
	+ Provide food for beneficial microbes
* Results in healthier soil for next growing season
* Grasses such as alfalfa, oats, rye – deep roots that break up and loosen compacted soil
* Legumes such as clover, vetch –grab nitrogen from the air and release it into the soil through their roots
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