

Let's Grow
BORD BIA
Bloom

Easy Steps to Dream Gardens

Garden Designs from Bloom Award-Winning Designers



The Entertainers' Garden

DESIGNER: LINDA MCKEOWN



Easy Steps to Dream Gardens

What is 'Easy Steps to Dream Gardens'?

Brought to you by Bord Bia Bloom, Easy Steps to Dream Gardens is a new initiative designed to help you plant your own show garden at home.

We have worked with seven of Bloom's award-winning show garden designers to create individual garden designs suited to every lifestyle and location.

What are the benefits of using garden designs like these?

The gardens have been designed by some of Ireland's top garden designers and landscape architects who are experts in assessing outdoor spaces and creating beautiful designs that meet the needs of garden owners.

These designs have been carefully considered to provide year-round interest and are tailored to suit various conditions. There is a solution for almost any garden, whether it sits in full-shade, dappled shade or enjoys all-day sun.

How have the gardens been designed?

The seven designs are based on a garden size of 15 metres x 9 metres. However, elements from all the designs can be adapted to suit your own outdoor space, whatever the size or location.

Each of the seven design packs in the series feature an easy-to-follow planting plan and detailed planting information. Colour-, scent- and nature-friendly, the planting plans can be implemented in your garden

The Entertainers' Garden

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This east-facing garden provides flexible spaces for easy entertaining.

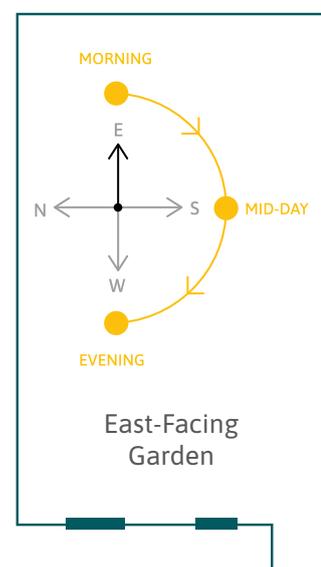
'Dividing your garden into separate zones that you can use at different times of the day really makes full use of your garden,' says garden designer Linda McKeown.

She has taken advantage of this garden's easterly aspect by including a patio space where the owners can enjoy early morning sun, a sunken patio with dining table that offers an enclosed space for entertaining throughout the day, and a raised platform at the back of the garden that provides a casual space to relax long into the evening. Naturalistic planting creates a sense of privacy for each of the spaces, with grasses and shrubs framing each area.

'When planting your garden, place the largest plants – such as trees and hedges – first, then add climbers, followed by shrubs,' says Linda. A clipped Box hedge (*Buxus sempervirens*), a line of upright grasses, or some topiary add structure and interest throughout the year. These can be interplanted with colourful perennials such as *Primula x japonica*, which starts flowering in April; Geraniums, which bloom throughout the summer; and *Aster frikartii 'Monch'*, which shines in August and September.

'Think about how plants perform through each season and how they will work together,' Linda advises. If your garden is very small incorporate plants with two seasons of interest, such as *Trachelospermum jasminoides* (Star Jasmine), a climber with beautifully scented, star-shaped white flowers in summer. 'This climber is evergreen but takes on striking shades of red in winter. It is happy in sun or partial shade so it is a versatile plant in the garden and as a climber it takes up less space, which is an added bonus in a small garden.'

Linda McKeown is a Belfast-based garden designer and horticulturist. She blends dynamic materials with naturalistic planting to create bold, simple form in the garden. Linda has been awarded four medals at Bord Bia Bloom, including a Gold Medal in 2019.



Linda's top tips for planning successful gardens.

Budget: Go for the best you can afford at the time and remember you don't have to do everything at once. If your budget is limited, start with the trees or other large plants that generally take longest to mature. Annual flowers from seed are a good way to provide flowers and colour until you're ready to embark on the next stage of the project.

Bark and stem colour: To get the best stem colour from *Cornus alba* and *C. sericea* (Dogwoods) let them establish for a couple of years before cutting them back. Then cut a third of the stems to ground level in early spring and repeat the exercise with different stems each year. Doing it this way means that you will always have a good supply of brightly coloured stems with a compact shape.



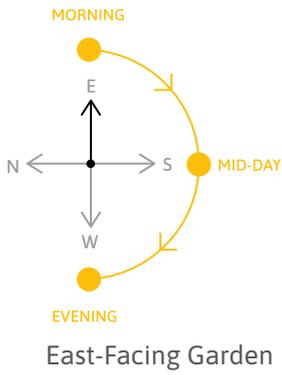
Trees and shrubs: If your garden is small consider planting suitable trees and shrubs in containers as this will restrict or slow their growth. For instance, *Acer palmatum* (Japanese Maple) will grow successfully in a container. An added benefit to planting trees in pots is that they can be moved to strategic positions around the garden so you can gain maximum benefit when they look their best.

Planning: It is good to have a plan in place before you start working on your garden, that way you won't go too far off track wasting valuable time and money.

I recommend seeking professional advice from a garden designer if your project is large or complicated – it could save you money in the long run!

Garden Plan

THE ENTERTAINERS' GARDEN



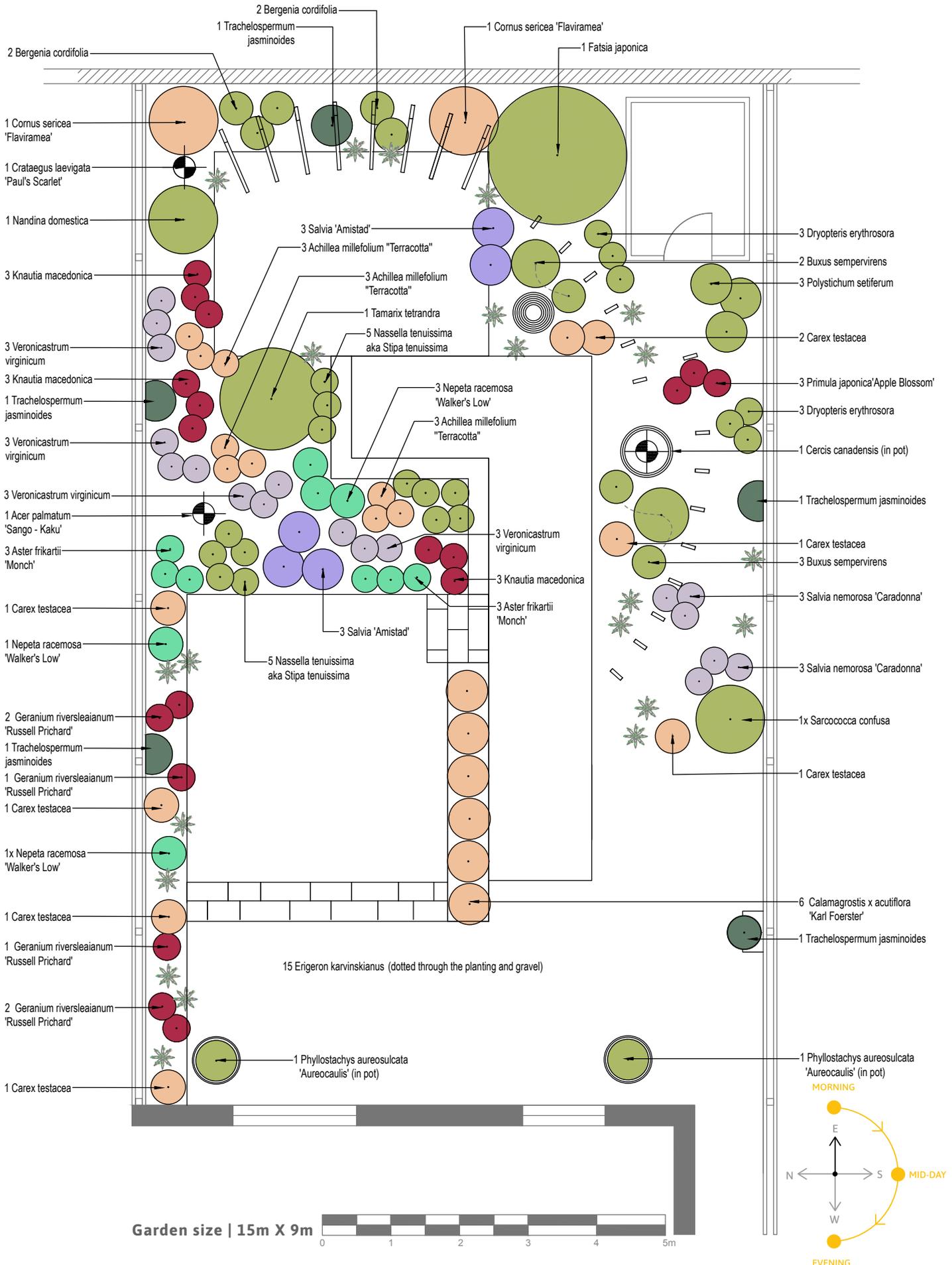
- 1 Curving pergola provides screening from neighbouring properties
- 2 Raised deck area with casual seating
- 3 Planted bed
- 4 Water rill
- 5 Sunken natural stone patio for dining
- 6 Uniform modern timber boundary fence
- 7 Storage shed, clad in mirrored steel
- 8 Sculpture focal point
- 9 Sculptural uprights
- 10 Planted gravel area
- 11 Raised polished concrete walkway
- 12 Natural stone patio



Garden size | 15m X 9m

Planting Plan

THE ENTERTAINERS' GARDEN



Plant	Pot Size	Qty
Trees		
Crataegus laevigata 'Paul's Scarlet'	10L	1
Acer palmatum 'Sango Kaku'	10L	1
Topiary (Clipped Shrubs)		
Buxus sempervirens [Box Clipped]		5-7
Shrubs		
Fatsia japonica	10L	1
Cercis canadensis [in a large pot]	10L	1
Cornus sericea	3L	2
Tamarix tetrandra	10L	1
Nandina domestica	10L	1
Sarcococca confusa	3L	1
Phyllostachys aureosulcata 'Aureocaulis' [large pot]	10L	2
Grasses + Ferns		
Carex testacea	2/3L	9
Calamagrostis x acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'	2/3L	6
Stipa tenuissima aka Nassella tenuissima	2/3L	12
Dryopteris erythrosora	2/3L	5
Polystichum setiferum	2/3L	5
Perennials		
Achillea millefolium 'Terracotta'	2/3L	9
Aster frikartii 'Monch'	2/3L	6
Bergenia cordifolia	2/3L	3-5
Erigeron karvinskianus	2/3L	9-12
Geranium riversleaianum 'Russell Prichard'	2/3L	5
Knautia macedonica	2/3L	7-9
Nepeta racemosa 'Walker's Low'	2/3L	5
Primula x japonica 'Apple Blossom'	2/3L	5
Salvia 'Amistad'	2/3L	5
Salvia nemorosa 'Caradonna'	2/3L	7-9
Veronicastrum virginicum	2/3L	7-9
Climber		
Trachelospermum jasminoides	3L	5



3D view of feature planting

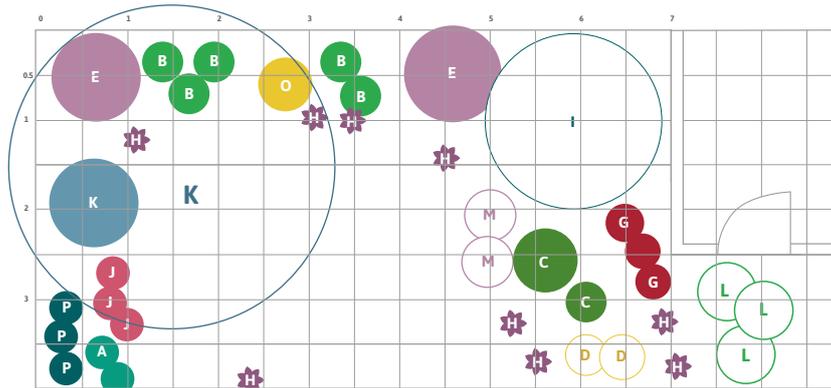


Border Area



Planting Plan

Grid - 0.5m



This border has been designed for a west-facing aspect within the garden but it will work in south, south-east or south-west facing locations.

'When creating the planting plan for this garden I chose a base of evergreens with lots of additional seasonal colour. Aim to have good "bones" and a good structure amongst your planting schemes with evergreens and grasses that maintain a presence in autumn and winter,' says Linda. 'Add colour and scent with seasonal plants throughout spring and summer; these will form the character of your garden. Your garden should change and evolve through the seasons and not become static.'

The tree *Crataegus laevigata* 'Paul's Scarlet' is the main presence in this border. It produces masses of deep scarlet-pink, double flowers in May and attractive small red haws in the autumn and, when mature, it develops a beautiful shape. It will tolerate all aspects and will grow happily in either sheltered or exposed locations. 'It's a great choice for a small garden,' says Linda.

The *Cornus sericea* 'Flaviramea' (yellow stemmed Dogwood), with its colourful upright stems, is a great plant to add interest to the back of this garden in winter. Its nectar/pollen rich flowers are good for pollinating insects such as bees in early summer.

You will find the full list of plants in the **planting plan**.

Border Plant List

A	<i>Achillea millefolium</i> 'Terracotta'
B	<i>Bergenia cordifolia</i>
C	<i>Buxus sempervirens</i> [Box Clipped]
D	<i>Carex testacea</i>
E	<i>Cornus sericea</i>
F	<i>Crataegus laevigata</i> 'Paul's Scarlet'
G	<i>Dryopteris erythrosora</i>
H	<i>Erigeron karvinskianus</i>
I	<i>Fatsia japonica</i>
J	<i>Knautia macedonica</i>
K	<i>Nandina domestica</i>
L	<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>
M	<i>Salvia</i> 'Amistad'
N	<i>Stipa tenuissima</i> aka <i>Nassella tenuissima</i>
O	<i>Trachelospermum jasminoides</i>
P	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>

Easy Steps to Dream Gardens

To view the other 6 Dream Garden Designs visit
bordbiabloom.com/dreamgardens



The Coastal Garden
by James Purdy



The Nature Enthusiast's Garden
by Jane McCorkell



The Easy Care Garden
by Oliver & Liat Schurmann



The Shared Spaces Family Garden
by Nicola Haines



The Family Friendly Garden
by Maeve O'Neill



The Plant Lovers Garden
by Patricia Tyrrell

Common Questions

What is a planting plan?

A planting plan is a comprehensive guide which shows you what plants to plant in your garden and where to plant them in order to achieve a successful planting scheme. All seven planting plans featured in this series are easy-to-follow and can be adapted to suit your garden size and aspect.

Can I still use the plans if I don't have a 15m x 9m garden?

Yes, for each design we have focused on a specific border which can be implemented in your own garden, regardless of size. The plans include a grid in each downloadable pack which can be repeated to suit the size of your border. Staff in your local garden centre will be able to offer further advice if required.

I only have a balcony or a window box. Can I still take part?

Yes, many of the plants featured in this series are suitable for container gardening (e.g. window boxes, hanging baskets and planters). Here are some useful tips to help you get started.

Where can I buy the plants?

The designers have chosen plants that are grown in Ireland and are readily available in garden retailers around the country. All the plants are available to purchase throughout the year, while bulbs can be purchased in the autumn.

How much do the designs cost to implement in my own garden?

The cost depends on a variety of factors, including the condition of and access to your garden and whether you want to invest in hard landscaping features. The focus borders in this series are a great way to liven up your garden on a budget. Many of the perennial and annual plants featured are very affordable and can help you add colour and interest without a significant outlay.

Is the aspect of my garden important when choosing a garden design?

Aspect is the direction a garden faces – north, south east or west - and determines how much sun or shade a space receives. Each of the garden designs has been designed for a specific aspect, so before choosing a design, find out the aspect of your own garden here – [link here](#)

The direction your garden faces will determine how much sun it will get throughout the day. For example, an east-facing garden will get good morning sun.. A south-facing garden will get sun for most of the day in summer, while

gardens that face west will get sun from late morning/early afternoon through to the evening. North-facing gardens tend to be shady and a little cooler. However, they may have sun to the rear of the garden which may be the best location for a seating area.

What other factors I should consider when choosing which garden design to plant in my own garden?

Good garden design starts with research and planning. Once you have found out your garden's aspect, the first step is to survey your existing garden. Your local garden centre is the best place to get expert advice on the following considerations:

- **Your location** – is your garden in an exposed coastal or upland location or a less exposed, sheltered location?
- **Your soil** – understanding the soil in your garden will inform what plants will work best for your plot. Soil textures vary from heavy clay to sand, while the ph. of your soil can vary from acid to alkaline. Once you understand the soil in your garden you can determine what you might need to do to improve it. The condition can be enhanced by adding soil conditioners such as farmyard manure or compost.
- **Changing levels** – is your garden flat or does it slope towards/away from the house? Is water runoff an issue? Do you need steps or terracing? This will help you plan any hard landscaping features. You should seek professional advice if you have drainage issues or notable level changes.
- **Adjoining properties** – what impact, if any, do adjoining properties have on your garden? Do neighbouring buildings or trees cast shade on your space? Do you need to add planting or structures to provide privacy in your garden?
- **Usage** – do you have small children or pets that are likely to try eating your plants? Look for plants with low/no toxicity. Your local garden centre will be able to offer further advice on this.
- **Measurements** – finally, measure your garden and plot it out on paper. Using graph paper will make it easier to plot your dimensions. Alternatively, you can print out the grid sheet we have provided at the back of this downloadable garden packs.

Once you have surveyed your garden and assessed your needs you can select the Dream Garden Plan that works best for you.

Common Questions

When should I start planting?

Pot/container-grown trees and shrubs can be planted year-round when the ground and weather conditions are favourable. It's important to remember to water trees regularly during the drier months until the tree is established, which is typically after two years.

Bareroot hedges are planted during the dormant season, which runs from November until early March. Plant these when the ground and weather conditions are favourable. As with trees, remember to water a new hedge during spells of dry weather.

Spring and summer bulbs such as Daffodils (Narcissus), Crocus, Tulips and Alliums are planted the previous autumn.

What is hard landscaping?

Hard landscaping is a term to describe the hard elements in your garden such as stone, concrete, and gravel. It generally refers to paths, patios and other built structures such as pergolas and water features.

If you are skilled at DIY you may be able to undertake some elements of the design yourself and there are plenty of resources available in online blogs and YouTube to

help you do this. However, if you are considering adding complex hard landscaping features to your garden then you may be better served hiring a professional. Hard landscaping is a long-term investment and should last throughout the lifespan of your garden so it is important to get it right from the outset.

What basic skills do I need?

Check out www.bordbia.ie to get advice and tips that can help you hone your gardening skills.

What equipment and products do I need?

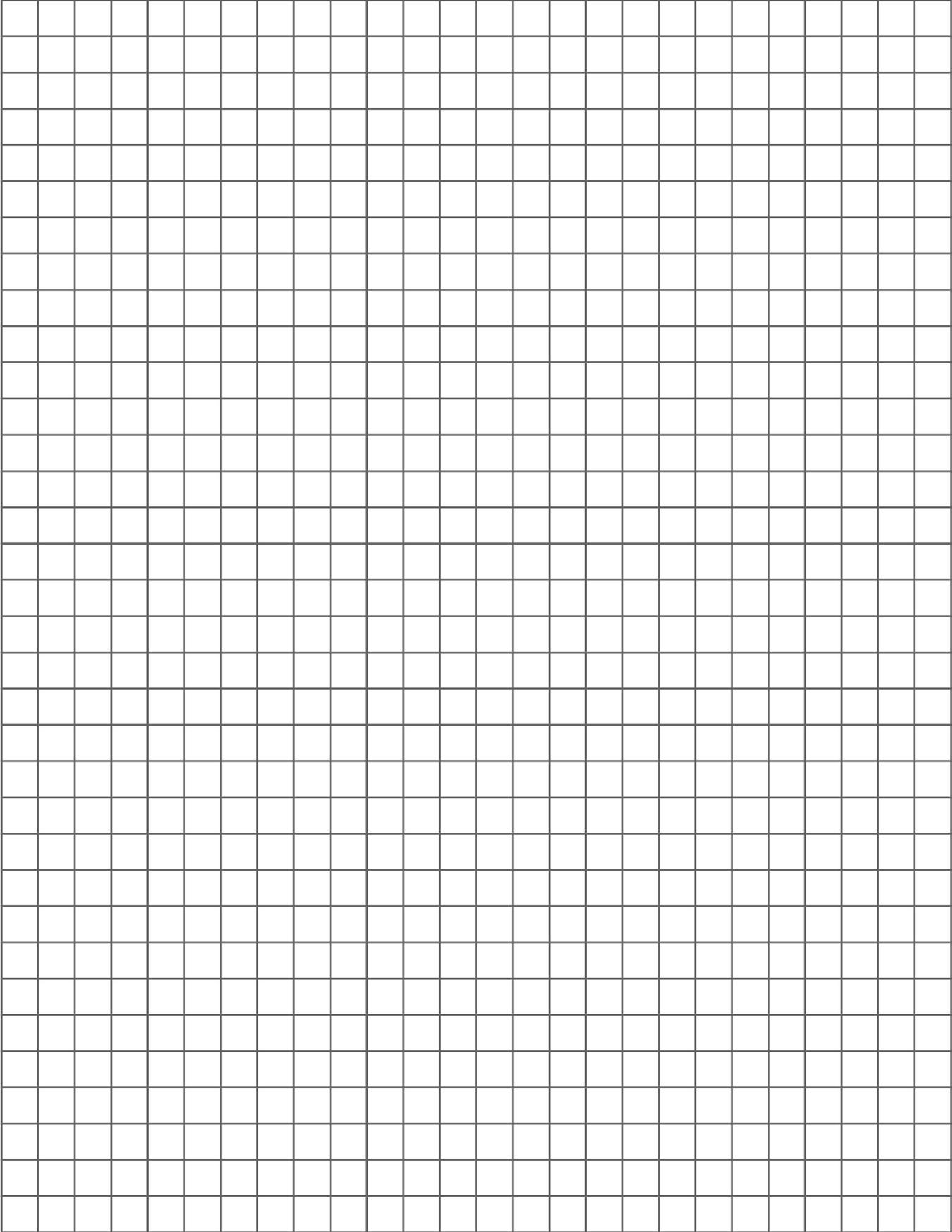
These 8 gardening essential tools and products will help you get started:

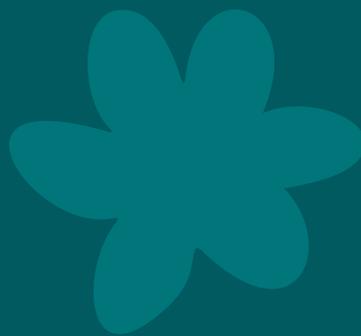
- Measuring tape
- Spade
- Fork
- Hand trowel
- Hand fork
- Rake
- Secateurs
- Compost

Glossary

- **Evergreen:** An evergreen plant keeps its leaves all year.
- **Deciduous:** A deciduous plant sheds its foliage in winter and produces new leaves in spring.
- **Trees:** Trees are typically large, evergreen or deciduous plants that have a single trunk, although they can be trained into a multi-stem (see below). If your garden is small opt for a species that suits your space, such as an Acer or Amelanchier lamarckii. Your local garden centre will be able to help you choose the best option for your space.
- **Shrubs:** Shrubs are evergreen or deciduous woody plants with several main stems near the ground. Smaller than a tree, they help add form and structure to your garden.
- **Perennials:** Perennials are plants that die back to the ground in the winter and re-emerge the following year.
- **Biennials:** Biennials are plant that live for two years. They typically produce foliage in the first year and flowers the following year. Like perennials, they die back to the ground in the winter and re-emerge the following year.
- **Annuals:** Annuals are plants that live for a year or less. These are great options if you wish to add colour to your garden on a tight budget.
- **Climbers:** Climbers are deciduous and evergreen climbing plants that can be trained to climb up trellises, fences or walls.
- **Bulbs:** Bulbs, such as Daffodils or Tulips, provide seasonal colour. They are planted in the autumn and flower throughout the spring.
- **Topiary:** Topiary is the art or practice of clipping shrubs or trees into ornamental shapes.
- **Multi-stem:** A multi-stem tree is a tree that has two or more stems. These have been trained to grow together by planting two or more single-stemmed trees in one hole or pot.
- **Coppice:** To coppice means to cut a tree or shrub back to ground level periodically to stimulate growth.
- **Espalier:** An espalier is a fruit tree or ornamental shrub whose branches are trained to grow flat against a wall, supported on a lattice.
- **Pleached:** A pleached tree or shrub features branches that are entwined or interlaced to form a hedge or provide cover for an outdoor walkway.

Grid Sheet





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