

Can Playing Animal Crossing Inspire Real-Life Frugal Gardening?

Love being in your garden? Playing video games might not be the first activity that you think of when you're looking for frugal gardening practices... but we reckon today's article will change that! In recent years, gardening-themed video games have blossomed in popularity (yes, pun intended), and we've seen them capturing the attention of players worldwide, whether that's via mobile games, casino games, or specific titles like Garden Paws, Animal Crossing, and [Stardew Valley](#). These aren't just providing virtual entertainment – they're teaching us valuable lessons in gardening.

Don't believe me? Let's check out how these virtual games can help you cultivate a sustainable garden in real life.

An Unlikely Source of Inspiration

Okay, first, let's admit that gardening and gaming are at opposite ends of the activity spectrum – and a lot of people aren't going to see the overlap... but that's what we want to change.

There are tons of games themed around nature, in all different genres. We all remember the wildly (perhaps excessively?) popular game Farmville, but it's far from the only one – lots of games have inspired us with a love of nature, whether that's farming or otherwise! Across platforms, we see nature-infused into digital, in a wonderful cross between the two.

Ever looked through the slots options at a casino? You'll see lots of nature-related games, with everything from Bamboo Rush to Mystic Wilds. Golden Buffalo and Lair of the White Tiger

are further signifiers of just how much we love our games to bring nature onto our screens, and you've also got Jungle Stripes – and that's just the tip of the iceberg. There are [slots](#) for pretty much everything nature-related you can imagine, plus many other games besides. Sure, casinos are particularly well-known for being varied and offering tons of options (one of the big benefits of the digital space, after all), but they are far from the only places you'll find these kinds of nature-themed games. If you're feeling your green thumbs itching but you're not inclined to go dig around outside right now, perhaps you'll be inspired by the likes of Stardew Valley and Animal Crossing.

Even better, these video games aren't just a fun way to pass the time... they're also educational. Really. Let's take a look at this! Stardew Valley? It teaches the importance of seasonal planting. Animal Crossing? It highlights the value of planning, as gamers are required to plant flowers and trees at the most appropriate times of the year. These titles place an emphasis on resource management, encouraging players to make the most of what they have – a principle that's essential to frugal gardening.

In-Game Strategies to Apply to Your Garden

Now that we've dug (again, pun intended) into why gardening simulation games can be such an asset when it comes to frugal gardening, let's get a better idea of what you can learn from these games. We've already mentioned Stardew Valley, which is a mobile and desktop simulation game, and the Nintendo Switch favorite Animal Crossing: New Horizons – so let's see what gems are made available through their gameplay. It's time to get our digital thumbs dirty.

Stardew Valley

Stardew Valley requires you to manage a farm, balancing the use of resources such as seeds, fertilizer, and water to ensure you get thriving crops. This virtual experience mirrors the real-life need to be mindful of how we use and conserve resources in our gardens. Playing the game involves structuring and [following a planting schedule](#) to the nth degree, taking into account the changing seasons and the different growth times of various crops.

A tip to takeaway

In the game, rotating crops and using companion planting boosts productivity and soil health – and in real life, these practices can reduce pests and enhance the fertility of your soil. For example, planting tomatoes alongside basil will improve their growth and flavor. Companion planting will also help you maximize space and resources, ensuring you can grow more produce in smaller areas (especially handy for urban gardeners or those with limited space).

Animal Crossing: New Horizons

While Stardew Valley is focused more on resource management, Animal Crossing takes a different tack: it introduces you to the concept of beautifying your land using a variety of different plant and tree species. Playing the game requires patience and strategic garden design – both of which are qualities that will serve you well when it comes to real-life gardening.

And what else? Animal Crossing is also a great way to understand the importance of plant placement, as by selecting and positioning compatible plants next to each other, players can create aesthetically pleasing and functional spaces without having to use all their resources. Show me one gardener who doesn't want to achieve the same results in their

real-life garden!

A tip to takeaway

Sustainability is another big focus in this game; as you play you'll be encouraged to recycle items. For your real-life garden, consider things like creating compost bins using old plastic containers or wooden pallets.

[Composting your kitchen scraps](#) and garden waste will enrich your soil, and lessen the need for store-bought fertilizers. What's more, taking such an approach won't just save your budget but it will also reduce your household waste and contribute to a more sustainable lifestyle.

Games Can Level Up Your Gardening Skills

So, there we have it! These are just two games that can provide practical gardening tips to transform your outdoor space in the most cost-effective ways possible. Plus, they also provide a safe space for trial and error, since if you do make a mistake in your plating schedule, the effects will be much less disastrous than in real life! Whether you're composting kitchen scraps or carefully designing your dream garden, the tips you can glean from Stardew Valley, Animal Crossing, and more can level up your gardening skills.

It's not just these games, of course – we can learn a lot from other kinds of gaming too. And if you're not in the mood for learning, you can still enjoy the beauty of nature by kicking back with some of the slots we mentioned above.

