

6 Health Benefits of Gardening: How It Boosts your Physical and Mental Health



6 HEALTH BENEFITS OF GARDENING:

How It Boosts your Physical and Mental Health

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The health benefits of gardening are not limited to supplying your food. Gardening is also a form of self-care. You can reap several tangible benefits from growing your food, including

physical and mental changes.

Improves Mood

Exercise, eating more veggies, and sunlight are all linked to improved mood.

Exercise and eating more veggies keep your [blood sugar steady](#), and you avoid the ups and downs of mood that are associated with unhealthy blood sugar levels.

[Sunlight](#) and [engaging in natural spaces](#) correlate with improved moods, although we do not know why exactly. Both have been shown to reduce depression symptoms and alleviate anxiety.

Improves Physical Health

Gardening involves carrying heavy things, bending and stretching, and walking. That's a whole workout: stretching, weight training, and aerobics.

And since gardens need almost daily attention, you can get regular exercise which is a key to preserving your health.

Reduces Risk of Lifestyle Diseases

The increased veggie intake and exercise levels in gardeners are associated with lower risks of things like diabetes and heart disease.

These diseases are called lifestyle diseases because your lifestyle heavily influences them. For example, high sugar, low-nutrient diets, and little exercise can exacerbate these conditions, while increased veggie eating and exercise can relieve them.

Reduces Stress

Gardening has been shown to reduce cortisol levels. Cortisol is the hormone we use to measure stress levels. High cortisol levels are associated with elevated blood sugar levels and reduced immune system efficacy and can alter your mood.

So while you are out weeding and feeding your garden, you are giving your body the tools it needs to deal with stress on a chemical level.

Time for Yourself

Gardening gives you time to pursue your curiosities. You can try different gardening experiments like growing exciting or exotic things, trying out other gardening tonics, or using your creativity to decorate and create beautiful sitting spaces to enjoy your garden even when you aren't working in it.

Self-Esteem

Gardening allows you to show yourself you can do amazing things. It is the perfect way to prove to yourself that you can solve complicated problems, set goals and achieve them, and be consistent enough to help another living thing thrive.

Accomplishing these things will raise your self-esteem and make you feel more capable and robust.

Conclusion: Health Benefits of Gardening

Gardening is a great way to improve the overall quality of your life while saving money and providing your food. For example, improved mood, nutrition, and exercise result in

significant physical and mental health benefits.

Read More:

[Why You Should Test Your Soil](#)

[5 Best Plants for a Privacy Wall](#)

[4 Smart Garden Devices That Save Time and Money](#)

Benefits of Community Gardens



I live in an apartment in San Francisco. I have a porch, windowsills with different light levels, and some counter space to do any gardening that I'd like to do. However, I don't have a yard. Therefore, if I wanted to get serious about outdoor gardening, I would need to explore other options. That's gotten me wondering about community garden.

San Francisco Loves Community Gardens

[San Francisco has over 40](#) community gardens. In case you didn't know, this sixte is approximately 50 square miles in total. We have lots of people. And yet, we have lots of green space. You'll find mini parks, small parks, rooftop gardens, and large parks all over. Plus we have beaches and other natural landscapes.

So, we have a lot of community gardens. You can join them as a resident. However, a lot of people want to get in on these. Therefore, there's typically a waiting list.

Benefits of Community Gardens

From what I can see so far, there are a lot of [great benefits](#) to community gardens. There are benefits for the individuals who do the garden as well as for the larger community.

Community Benefits

Gardens strengthen and beautify the local community. They bring the health and wellness of nature to urban areas. People come together in new ways, saying hi to their neighbors as the swap seeds and work side by side. I San Francisco, we often miss out on opportunities to mingle with different generations of people. Community gardens offer a great place to do that.

Sometimes these gardens give back through various programs. They might teach kids about gardening. Perhaps the healthy produce grown is given to people in need. Each garden is different but there are many ways that they give to the community.

Individual Benefits

I actually got started thinking about this when I was recently reading the popular book about Swedish Death Cleaning by Margareta Magnusson. The book is primarily about decluttering, but she mentions gardening several times. She loves gardening, and yet as she aged, she realized that she couldn't do the massive gardening projects that she had done in the past. Therefore, when she downsized to a smaller house, she gifted all of the tools in her gardening shed to the new homeowners, who were thrilled to take on her gardening hobby.

7 Benefits to Consider

She moved to a place that has a garden for the apartment building. And she listed some of the benefits as:

- The whole area is kept beautiful whether or not she does the work.
- There's always someone new to take on gardening tasks if you're no longer up to the task.
- Sharing seeds and tools makes gardening more affordable.

She continues to grow small things on her balcony while also enjoying the community garden. Additional benefits for the individual include:

- An opportunity to learn more about gardening from those who know
- Friendship, connection, a reprieve from loneliness
- All of the mental and physical health benefits of connection to the earth
- Easy access to many different kinds of plants and produce even if you only grow one type yourself then barter

Have you ever tried a community garden? What are your thoughts?

Read More:

- [Expand Your Gardening Possibilities With Seed Swapping](#)
 - [Gardening: More than a Solo Activity](#)
 - [10 Ways to Get Free Plants](#)
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5 Reasons to Start a Garden This Spring



5 REASONS TO
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Normally, I don't need to think of reasons to start a garden. I'm intrinsically motivated to start anew each spring.

In the dead of winter, I usually get incredibly excited about the prospect of gardening in March. As soon as the seed catalogs arrive, I start to plan. I dream about the new varieties I want to try as I flip through the glossy magazines and I draw up sketches of my garden beds to decide what I want to plant where. I don't usually need a reason to get excited.

This year is a little different. With the pandemic raging on, lockdowns in effect, and stress levels getting higher every day, I feel disconnected from the things I enjoy—especially gardening. So, to boost my morale, I've been thinking much more intentionally about the reasons to start a garden. It's led me to realize that the reasons don't always have to be the same. They can change and evolve, and they don't always have to fit a specific mold.

Why You Should Start a Garden This Spring

Thinking about starting a garden this year? There are plenty of good reasons to get growing. Here are a few that I've been thinking about:

Home-grown lettuce is way cheaper than the grocery store stuff. The fancy [greens](#) you buy at the grocery store? They're incredibly easy to grow, and many varieties are cut-and-come-again. One tiny seed will net you multiple delicious salads!

You can share what you grow. Loneliness has been a recurring theme of this pandemic. You can't visit loved ones. Gatherings are too dangerous, so people have been spending more and more time alone. Sharing what you grow can help you connect with people you otherwise can't spend time with during this time. Sharing sustenance is a wonderful way to show you care.

It's a great family activity. These days school closures and adjustments have caused families to spend way more time together. Parents fret about the effect not being in school has on kids, but I say take this time to get into a hobby

together. School will be out this summer anyhow, so spend the time together cultivating a garden. Couples can also use gardening to bond and strengthen their relationship.

You can grow exotic ingredients. Going to the grocery store is no longer the safe haven it once was. You can't just pop into different supermarkets to find that one weird ingredient for your favorite [recipe](#). Grow it yourself instead! Love bok choy stir fry? Grow some in your garden.

To take your mind off of things. Gardening has a meditative quality. When I'm in the garden, I often forget about everything else. You can't always turn your brain off. Tuning into the world is important. But to have space where you can decompress is incredibly valuable.

What are some of your unconventional reason for starting to garden this spring? What's the one thing that's calling you back? Is it food security? Is it stress relief? Let me know in the comments.

5 Best Plants for a Privacy Wall



5 Best Plants for a Privacy Wall

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A little bit of privacy can turn a plain outdoor space into a cozy oasis. Climbing, vining, and towering plants are perfect natural plant privacy wall options. With a plant privacy wall,

there's no need to fuss with the extra cost of lumber, fencing, or ready-made privacy accessories. Plants are a free, simple way to keep your yard, patio, or porch hidden from prying eyes. No need to worry about heading out to water your flowers in your pajamas!

A Word of Caution

Do your homework before settling on a plant for your DIY plant privacy wall. It may seem cheap now, but if you pick an invasive species, you'll end up spending a chunk of money on getting rid of the spreading beast.

Consider also how a plant-ish privacy wall will affect other plant life nearby. Will there be enough shade to grow your favorite tomatoes next year? Will you still be able to enjoy the sunshine on your patio?

Don't forget to find out how long it takes for the plant to mature. Will it take a decade for the vine to engulf your deck's trellis? A plant that grows too quickly may turn [invasive](#). If it takes forever to spread, it'll be useless for immediate privacy purposes.

Lastly, does the plant provide privacy throughout the year? Evergreen cedars don't shed their leaves in the winter, so they act as a permanent living fence. Flowering vines, however, may wither away in the winter and fail to provide enough of a screen during the colder months. If you're not outside much in the winter, then this consideration matters little.

Best Plants for a Privacy Wall

Climbing Roses

What better way to gain privacy than with the help of

beautiful blooms? [Climbing roses](#) pair well with a variety of support structures, so they're an excellent pick for an elevated patio or deck.

Bamboo

While some types of bamboo are invasive, others aren't as high maintenance. Bamboo is a tall plant that's super easy to grow. Avoid aggressive bamboo species that send out runners. Don't take chances, though. Install an underground barrier to prevent unwanted spread. Bamboo is an excellent choice for adding privacy around a pool area. It looks tropical, but it's a lot less work to maintain than other tropical plants.

Boxwood

While [boxwood](#) won't grow super tall, it's an excellent choice for adding privacy if you don't have a standard trellis or wall. I'm wary of vining plants because of a past (very awful) experience with an invasive vine, so I love the idea of placing attractive boxwood plants in tall pots for a chic, modern, privacy wall. Since nothing in containers is permanent, you can also move around the containers should you want to open up the previously hidden area.

Fake Plants

Hey, why not? Not everyone has a green thumb, but artificial plants are gaining momentum, and more people are adding them to their indoor and outdoor living spaces. Why? They require no water, no weeding—and they last forever. If you're prone to killing plants, faux greenery might be a worthy alternative to a living plant privacy wall.

Jasmine vine

This fragrant vining plant is a gorgeous summer bloomer. It takes a while for it to spread, so it's not for those who want instant-privacy. It's also better suited for warm climates and doesn't tolerate cold weather. You'll need to start training the vines early on to ensure that the plant grows onto its support structure. [Pruning](#) is also necessary to encourage a bushy growth habit.

7 Garden Inspection Tasks for Thriving Plants



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Why do I bother walking through my garden multiple times a day? Let's talk about my top garden inspection tasks.

We're in the midst of a [heatwave](#) in my neck of the woods and the garden is loving it. The heat-sensitive plants have all bolted and been pulled in favor of heat-loving edibles. I make it a point to visit the garden at least twice every day—even when it's sweltering hot outside. I swear I was sweating just standing there while watering this morning!

No matter how hot it is, though, I make sure to get out there as much as possible.

Most important garden inspection tasks

At some point, the garden goes into autopilot mode. All that you have to do is make sure your plot gets enough water. In my region, Mother Nature helps with that quite a bit. For those with irrigation systems set up, watering is another task that's on auto.

But even if your garden is doing a-okay, you still need to check on it from time to time. Regular visits are essential for a thriving garden.

And when I talk about checking on your garden, I don't mean a quick pop-by. When I head outside to talk to my plants, I'm there for at least 10-15 minutes. My garden checks consist of thorough visual inspections.

Here are the garden inspection tasks I think are most important:

Plant stress: Are any of my plants showing signs of stress? Are they wilting? It may mean they need more water.

Signs of disease: Are leaves browning or are my plants looking sickly? The plant might have a disease. If there's any sort of visual anomaly, I also check for signs of pest activity.

Signs of pest activity: Some pests (like striped potato beetles) are easy to spot. Their orange carapaces and eggs are

easy to find among lush green foliage. Some pest eggs are hidden on the underside of leaves, so don't forget to check there. Check closely for pests even if there's no visible plant damage. Squish and remove eggs before the bugs ever have a chance to do any damage.

Water pooling: Is there an area of your garden where water tends to pool? You might need to reconsider planting in that area since most plants don't do well in waterlogged soil.

Tall plants: It's incredible how quickly plants grow at the height of the summer. I swear my [tomatoes](#) shot up several inches overnight. Tall, quick-growing plants like peppers, beans, and tomatoes need support. Upon inspection, pluck suckers from tomatoes and make sure to provide your scraggly plants with support structures like cages or bamboo poles.

Bolting: It's an unfortunate side effect of summer heat and plants require your immediate attention. Once you spot bolting, it's possible to save nearby plants that have yet to send up flower stalks by providing extra shade and mulching to cool the soil's surface. If you notice everything has already bolted, the sooner you pull everything, the sooner you can plant something new in the same spot.

Things that are ready to harvest: The more often I check on my garden, the sooner I'll notice things that are ready for [harvest](#), which helps to cut down on garden waste.