

Garden GUIDE

Sunday, April 27, 2025



Tips for the gardening beginner

Gardening is a popular hobby all over the world. Ruby Home Luxury Real Estate estimates there are 71.5 million gardening households in the United States alone. That translates to around 185.9 million people engaged in some form of gardening, which places the U.S. among other countries where gardening is wildly popular, including Australia and China.

A greater number of people are showing interest in gardening, which is a rewarding hobby that's good for the mind and the body. Those who are new to gardening may need a crash course to get started. These pointers can help anyone foster a newfound passion for gardening.

Choose the best location

Spend time in the yard and decide where to house a garden. A far-off corner may get the most sun, but will you forget about the garden if it is too far away? Ideally, the garden should be located where it will get at least six to eight hours of sun each day. There also should be a water source nearby. The spot also should be convenient

so that it is easy to go and pick vegetables or prune flowers.

Start small

If you're new to gardening, begin with a small garden footprint so that you can get your feet wet. A raised garden bed can be a good starting point because it is contained and easy to maintain. As your experience (and garden) grows, you can add to the garden size the next time around.

Amend the soil

It's possible but unlikely that the soil in the backyard is the perfect mix to grow healthy plants. It's more likely that the garden will need some soil modification. You can test the soil makeup with do-it-yourself kits or work with a garden center. A garden typically requires a mix of compost to add nutrients to the dirt; peat moss or coconut coir to help with water retention and to make the soil lighter; and vermiculite that helps to retain water. A compost bin set up at the same time as the garden allows gardeners to continually produce nutrient-rich food to add to the garden.

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Spring is in the Air!

After months of cold weather, everyone should be more than ready to open their doors and reclaim their outdoor space! John's Country Nursery's goal is to help you bring the beauty of your home outdoors, and there's no better time to visit than their Annual Spring Open House weekend May 2-4. During this time, you will find the best selection, and prices of the season. John's carries a great selection of annuals, perennials, trees, shrubs, and fruit & vegetable plants.

Decor for inside and out fills the shop. Whether you are looking for wind spinners, wind chimes, birdhouses, bird feeders, seasonal yard stakes, or gazing balls the selection is great. An entire section is devoted to Fairy Garden components to create a magical area in your own backyard. John's Country Nursery is also one stop shopping for all of your



bee supplies.

The Open House will run May 2 & 3 from 9am to 5pm, and Sunday, May 4, from 10 am to 5pm. On Saturday only, there will be an herb planting demonstration at 1pm, and the Geauga County Master Gardeners will be on hand from 11am to 3pm to answer your gardening questions. Mark your calendars and get inspired by the

beauty of the season!

John's Country Nursery Inc.
15808 Old State Road,
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Phone : (440) 632 - 0016
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Sabo's Woodside Nursery: The Company and Crew



Sabo's Woodside Nursery & Garden Center, Inc. has built and maintained its reputation for growing top quality plants for over 40 years. But's Sabo's also grows gardeners, young and old, new and seasoned. The experienced staff, representing three generations in the industry, love to garden and to share their knowledge and experience.

Bring New Life to Your Garden with Native Plants

Native plants have grown in Ohio for thousands of years, evolving alongside our climate, soil, and wildlife. They are more than just beautiful. They are resilient, low maintenance, and ecologically beneficial.

At Plant It Native, we believe your garden can thrive as part of the local ecosystem. Native plants support pollinators, provide shelter and food for wildlife, and bloom brightly from spring through fall. Once established, they often require little to no watering, fertilizer, or care compared to non-native alternatives.

Whether you're creating a pollinator paradise or simply adding a few vibrant blooms to your yard, choosing native is one

of the easiest and most rewarding ways to make a positive impact. You can browse our plant list, place preorders, and check our sale schedule online at plantitnativeohio.com. You'll find us most Saturdays from May through October at the Willoughby Outdoor Market from 8 a.m. to noon and at special pop-up markets throughout the season.

Alongside our plants, we offer a small batch of seasonal homemade goods made from native species, including ramp salt in the spring, junberry jam in early summer, and fresh pawpaw fruit in the fall.

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram @plantitnative for updates, planting tips, and seasonal inspiration.

Shoppers looking for a colorful hanging basket, creating a vegetable garden, or redesigning their landscape, consistently find more than they were seeking here. Even their brochure is packed with plant care info.

The company was founded in 1982 by nationally recognized rhododendron hybridizer and grower, James Sabo, his wife Donna, an enthusiastic teacher, and son Brian, who grew up surrounded by horticulturists and teachers, and has by necessity and desire, developed and understanding anything mechanical.

As Sabo's president, Brian does it all, making sure they grow the best varieties, with the most up to date techniques and procedures, but nothing beats time in the big rig. He takes pride in delivering his colorful plants to other garden centers in northeast Ohio and Western Pennsylvania. He also has a successful business hauling private and show horses across the country, Haul Your Horses, LLC.

Garden Center manager, Cathee Thomas, joined the crew in 2003, after 25 years at Holden Arboretum. She finds unique perennials and nursery stock to add variety to the basic landscape plants. She is also the voice of Sabo's, sharing garden tips live Tuesday and Thursday afternoons on WKKY 104.7 FM and Mix 97.1FM on Friday mornings.

Discover the Difference at Sabos-Nursery.com.

Annuals vs. Perennials

By Cathee Thomas - Garden Center Manager
Sabo's Woodside Nursery & Garden Center-Madison, Ohio

"Should I plant annuals or perennials, What's the difference?" is a frequently asked question with an easy answer. Both. Let me explain why.

Annuals are planted annually, so you are always planting them. This is why many people do not like to plant them. However, they are also always blooming. What's not to like about that!

Here's why. Annuals are rapid growers that include marigolds, impatiens, petunias and hundreds more that surge through their entire life cycle, germination, bloom, and set seed, in just one season. Most will bloom from the time you plant them to well into the fall. They give you quite a bang for your buck.

Pop them in containers, edge a walkway, between perennials, plant a cutting garden, or over your tulips and daffodils when the foliage fades.

Perennials are a near permanent addition to the garden. They offer a greater variety of sizes and textures for the garden with something for every garden environment. They include, daylilies, iris, hosta, and thousands more. Bloom times vary by the month, from a few weeks to a few months, but with regular deadheading (seed removal) many will bloom most of the season. Interesting foliage is a consideration when choosing perennials.

They are a great landscape filler when shrubs a small and easy to move when the shrubs grow.

These are the reasons why you should plant both. Each has a special niche in the garden.

Imagine your garden as a body, the trees and shrubs would be the skeleton, the perennials are the muscles, and the annuals are the skin. But where are the organs? The soil of course! That's where the body gets its nutrients and water.

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Sources: National Gardening Association, Garden Media Garden Trends Report

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Plant starter guide

It's best to keep a few things in mind when planning the garden. Think about what will grow well in your climate. Consider how big the garden will be and the size of mature plants. A small garden will not be able to accommodate corn, for example. Also, how would you like the space to look and what will be its function? Is this a purely aesthetic garden or one that will be food-bearing?

Start seeds inside

If you'll be starting a garden from seeds, it's best to start indoors before your region's frost-free date. This way the delicate plants will get the needed care and can establish before they go outdoors in the ground. Keep them humid by covering the seedlings in plastic wrap. You can start the seeds in



different containers, even empty egg cartons. Transplant to larger containers after the seedlings grow a second set of leaves. Once you're free from overnight frost, you can place the established, strong seedlings in the ground. An automatic watering system, such as a timer hooked up to the sprinkler, can keep the garden well watered, which increases the chances of success. Then it will only be a matter of weeks before the garden can be enjoyed throughout the season.

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How to establish a peaceful backyard retreat

Backyards have undergone quite a transformation over the last decade-plus. The days when patios and decks were all a backyard living space had to offer are largely a thing of the past, as homeowners have realized just how valuable it can be to commit to a stunning backyard. The real estate experts at Zillow estimate that homes with backyard features such as outdoor televisions, outdoor showers and outdoor kitchens command 3.1 percent more than expected upon reaching the market. If 3.1 percent doesn't sound like a lot, it actually equates to nearly \$11,000 on a typical home. But there's more to gain than money when converting a backyard space into a relaxing respite. Such spaces can provide a welcoming escape from the hustle and bustle of daily life, all the while giving homeowners and residents a comfortable space to soak in the great outdoors. With that in mind, homeowners can take the following steps to establish a peaceful backyard retreat.

- Refresh the landscape. Even if

your vision is centered on outdoor furniture and a space that accommodates movie nights under the stars, it's still best to refresh the existing landscape if it needs a little upkeep. Overgrown trees, hedges and bushes can create the same cluttered vibe that dominates interior spaces overrun with items. If necessary, work with a local tree service or landscape architect to trim, or even remove, trees and hedges that are crowding the backyard and making it feel claustrophobic or giving it an unkempt look. Aim for a landscape that affords a balance of sun and shade so the space is as comfortable as possible throughout the day.

- Set up multiple gathering spaces, if possible. Once a backyard retreat is established, everyone who calls the property home might find the space hard to resist. Keep this in mind when planning the space and aim to set up multiple gathering spaces. An outdoor kitchen with a nearby dinner table can be a great space to enjoy al fresco dining, but a separate area to read a book

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Gardening safety for seniors

Longer hours of daylight and warming temperatures are hallmarks of spring and each of these variables do much to contribute to the reputation of a season that's become synonymous with rejuvenation. After months spent confronting cold temperatures and huddling up indoors, people might find the welcoming conditions of spring irresistible, which compels many to spend more time outdoors.

There's no shortage of things to do outside in spring, and the season marks a perfect time to reestablish one's green thumb and get down and dirty in the garden. Gardening is a rewarding and healthy activity, though some, particularly seniors, may need to approach springtime sessions in the garden with a heightened degree of caution. Seniors can keep these health and safety tips in mind as they celebrate the return of spring and what that means for their gardens.

- Recognize that gardening is exercise. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identifies gardening as a good form of exercise, and evidence supports the notion that gardening is a particularly beneficial form of physical activity. A 2024 meta-analysis published in the Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery & Psychiatry indicated that individuals who engaged in low levels of leisure time physical activities such as gardening are likely to have a lower risk of stroke than peers who are sedentary. It's important to keep these findings in mind when gardening, which is perhaps more physically demanding than some may recognize. Seniors can approach gardening just like they would other forms of exercise, taking the same precautions, such as stretching before and after each



session and making a concerted effort to remain hydrated, while out in the garden.

- Incorporate rest into your garden routine. Rest is vital for anyone engaged in physical activity, including gardeners. Frequent breaks during gardening sessions can help avoid strains and sprains and provide opportunities to hydrate and get out of the sun. If possible, seniors can identify a shaded spot on their properties and place a bench there so they have somewhere to rest during gardening sessions.
- Utilize ergonomic gardening tools and other specialized products. The Center for Excellence in Disabilities at West Virginia University notes that ergonomics studies movements of a person's body during physical activities in an effort to produce tools that ensure a task has as little physical impact on the body as possible. Ergonomic tools are designed to lower injury risk, improve efficiency and increase satisfaction that stems from performing a particular activity. Before each gardening season, seniors can inspect their existing tools and replace them with ergonomic alternatives, if necessary. In addition, seniors can utilize specialized products, including long-handled gardening tools that reduce the need to bend over or kneel down, to further reduce their risk of injury while working in the garden. These simple strategies can ensure seniors' springtime gardening sessions are as safe as they are rewarding.

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Flowers on the Vine Expands with New Location in Willoughby

Get ready, flower lovers—Flowers on the Vine is blooming with a fresh location in Willoughby, Ohio. Owned by Founder Joanna Nachtigal-Zona, the new location offers a dynamic outdoor marketing model to the community, featuring a complete seasonal selection of Christmas trees and pumpkins, plus stunning floral arrangements year round. Meanwhile, the original Cleveland location is set to transition into a franchise, marking a significant milestone in the company’s expansion.

For those seeking a stable investment opportunity, Flowers on the Vine stands solid in the ever-thriving \$12 billion floral industry, according to Zona. The industry is further projected to hit \$25 billion by the end of 2025 as stated on Artizon, a market research company.

“The reason to invest in Flowers on the Vine is twofold,” says Nachtigal-Zona. “I bring the experience of a veteran floral franchisee, combined

with my background as an educator. I know how to teach, and I know how to build successful businesses. Flowers have always been a staple in the gift industry, yet the market remains wildly underserved. Just last year, FTD (Florists’ Transworld Delivery) reported over 20,000 unfulfilled orders—there’s demand, and we have the expertise to meet it.”

Flowers on the Vine is committed to a strategic and data-driven approach to expansion. By leveraging insights from leading floral aggregators like FTD, the brand is pinpointing high-demand markets and actively securing franchise locations where they are needed most.

Nachtigal-Zona and her team have also partnered with a nationwide real estate expert to help franchisees secure prime locations, working to create a seamless investment.

“It really is a complete package,” Nachtigal-Zona adds. “With our

dual-purpose retail model—serving both local customers and fulfilling online orders—we ensure multiple revenue streams. Flowers on the Vine is ranked among the TOP 250 florists in the FTD network, so franchise owners are stepping into a proven, highly scalable business.”

Entrepreneurs interested in bringing Flowers on the Vine to their community will benefit from full franchise support, including marketing, branded elements, a streamlined operational model, exclusive access to national aggregators, and comprehensive training.

Flowers on the Vine is now welcoming inquiries from entrepreneurs eager to join a brand that blends artistry with strong business potential. For more information on franchise opportunities, visit [https://flowerson-](https://flowersonthevinefranchise.com)



thevinefranchise.com/ or contact the Flowers on the Vine franchise team today.

About Flowers on the Vine

Flowers on the Vine is a premier floral brand known for its exceptional quality, artistic arrangements, and seamless integration of online and local sales. Ranked among the TOP 250 florists in the FTD network, the company offers a scalable franchise model designed to empower entrepreneurs with comprehensive support, marketing expertise, and a turnkey operational system. To learn more, visit <https://flowersonthevinefranchise.com>.

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RETREAT >> FROM PAGE 3

or watch a movie or ballgame can make the space more versatile. Some may want to relax away from the noise of the grill area, and multiple gathering spaces ensures there’s always a peaceful spot to unwind out back.

• **Add a water feature.** Running water has a way of calming the nerves, and that’s good to keep in mind when planning a backyard retreat. Water features run the gamut from garden ponds to koi ponds to fountains to hot tubs. Homeowners can identify which feature best aligns with their idea of relaxation

and then work with a landscape architect to ensure it’s installed in their backyard oasis.

• **Don’t forget shade.** Temperatures are rising in many areas of the globe, and that’s worth noting when planning a backyard retreat. Even the most ardent sun worshippers likely won’t want to be exposed to the sun at all times when relaxing in their backyards. Strategically chosen means of providing shade can make spaces enjoyable all day long. Consider umbrellas, gazebos, pergolas, and even retractable awnings to cover patios and decks when the sun is at its highest each afternoon. If you plan to spend ample time in the grass, make that more enjoyable by planting shade trees, which also can protect the grass from drought and make it more comfortable underfoot.

A relaxing backyard retreat can make for an ideal space to escape the hustle and bustle of daily life.



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