

Great Gardens in Small Spaces

Washington County Master Gardener™ Association



Gardening In the Pacific Northwest

The Pacific Northwest (PNW) region spans from Southern Canada to Northern California and offers wonderful growing conditions.

Right Place – The optimum growing situation for different plants in the PNW

- We have relatively mild wet winters and warm, dry summers
- Washington County is in US Department of Agriculture (USDA) zone 8*

Right Plant – Choosing the right plants for a space cuts down on the maintenance.

- Choose plants that fit in USDA zone 8.
- Consider native ornamental plants.
- Plant fruits and vegetables specifically suited for the Northwest.

Right Care – Follow these healthy practices for your ornamental and vegetable gardens.

- Locate vegetable gardens away from old painted buildings, roads with heavy traffic, and away from the drip line of the house.
- Cover (or mulch) soil in beds using materials such as compost, straw or bark mulch to reduce dust and soil from splashing onto vegetables and ornamental plants.
- If using raised beds or containers
 - ◇ Fill with clean soil labeled for pots/raised beds — do not use soil from your yard.
 - ◇ Cover with compost. You may need to add additional compost as it continues to decompose.
 - ◇ Avoid use of railroad ties, telephone poles, and previously painted wood to build your beds because they may contain chemicals that can migrate into soil. Recent pressure-treated wood may be used, but is not ideal.
- Consider wearing gloves while gardening and remove the gloves when leaving the garden.
- Always wash your hands after gardening and remind children who play or work in the garden to avoid touching their mouths and wash their hands.
- Thoroughly wash and/or peel garden produce. This is especially important for leafy and root vegetables, which are more likely to have soil particles on their surfaces.



Right Help — Even with the right place, the right plant, and the right care, gardening questions arise from time to time. The following resources provide reliable information:

- Master Gardeners™ <https://bit.ly/MetroMG>
- Clackamas County Master Gardeners™ gardening handouts in English <https://bit.ly/ccmghandouts>
- Grow Natives Oregon Flora Oregon Flora searchable database listing of native plants <https://bit.ly/grownatives>
- PNW Plants [WSU searchable database](#) of plants that do well in the Pacific Northwest

* **USDA Hardiness or Climate Zones** are based on the lowest average temperature an area is expected to receive during the winter. If your zone is equal to or higher than the zone listed for the plant, it will be hardy for you and can thrive in your climate. These are **not** the same as Sunset Zones, which use a different numbering system

