

# 'Self-Sufficiency in Learning How to Create a Year-Round Homesteading Garden and Gardening Tools 101' with Gerry Fradette

## Essential gardening tools:

- ⇒ Broadfork.
- ⇒ Bow, garden, hand, leaf, and stone rake.
- ⇒ Dibbler.
- ⇒ Garden scissors, hose, glove, and hat.
- ⇒ Hand and stirrup cultivators.
- ⇒ Handheld, round-pointed, and spade shovel.
- ⇒ Pruners.
- ⇒ Rain barrel, watering can, and water pump.
- ⇒ Soil blocker.
- ⇒ Warren and draw hoe.
- ⇒ Wheelbarrow.

## How to Make Your Backyard a Homestead Garden Adventure:



### Plan:

Before planning, it is essential to consider four factors, which include water, oxygen, sunlight, and nutrients, as they shape the growing space. For instance, plants that are grown in the wrong temperature, a shady spot, or too close together, are at risk of wilting or dying due to not receiving an adequate amount of sunlight. Therefore, it might be better to start small and experiment with the four factors to determine the ideal conditions. Furthermore, take into consideration how the gardening tools mentioned above will be brought in, the daily tasks that have to be performed, what tools are most needed, and so on.



### Differents Way to Garden:

There are several ways to garden, such as containers, raised beds, and vertical. The benefits of having a container or pot gardening are that it is portable, works well in small spaces, eliminates weed problems, and has control over soil quality. Raised beds allow maximize space, good drainage, prevents soil compaction, and easier is to take care of the plants without bending too much. Moreover, a vertical garden can improve air quality, the ability to grow more plants, and enhance visual appeals. In Gerry's case, he employs vertical, in-ground, and greenhouses to grow his various crops, such as peas, kale, asparagus, figs, and so on.

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### Soil:

The type of soil used is essential as it determines whether the plant flourishes or is at risk of not surviving. Overall, the soil mixture should include three elements, which are vermiculite, compost, and peat moss. Also, incorporating compost can assist with plant growth, which can be constructed simply by using a blend of leaves and organic materials, such as clippings. In Gerry's case, he has a leaf compost space, which is a great way to reuse and create nutrient-rich soil with a balance of nitrogen and carbon. Moreover, another benefit of compost is that it can repel weeds when used as a top dressing or mulch.



### Type of Plant to Grow:

Before choosing what type of plant to grow, first research about what plants best flourish in the region, and then whether the garden will include annuals, biannual, and/or perennial plants. It is helpful to select plants that provide high-yield crops, such as herbs and leafy greens, which can be continuously harvested all season through using a greenhouse. Also, although annuals and biannual plants, such as sweet peas germinate and bloom all within a year, perennials often take more time to establish, but it's a long-term investment, such as growing asparagus. Lastly, decide whether to grow plants that complement one another, such as tomato and garlic. The advantages of companion planting include pest control, pollination, and maximizing the space.



### Water:

There are multiple ways to water a garden by employing different systems, such as soaker hoses, rain barrels, and so on. A soaker hose assists with targeting the plant, not the surrounding dirt. Note, it is critical to focus on watering the roots instead of the leaves as the plant is likely to become susceptible otherwise to fungus or mildew. Also, gardeners can conserve water and reduce their water bills through harvesting rainwater by using a rain barrel that can be installed at the bottom of a downspout. Another advantage of rain barrels is that most have a hose attachment, which makes it more convenient to water. Given the size of Gerry's garden, he owns a pool to draw water from.

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### **Maintenance:**

Like other types of gardening, a homestead approach requires the same or more level of maintenance. Weeding is a significant aspect as it will steal nutrients, exploit growth, crowd the plant, and create shade, which is why it is essential to weed regularly. Furthermore, for organic gardening without the use of pesticides and/or chemicals, it is best to utilize natural remedies and manually removing bugs, and pests. As mentioned previously in the soil section, compost can repel weeds when used as a top dressing or mulch.

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