

Getting Started with Urban Gardening

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One of the pleasures a garden can provide is the satisfaction of growing your own food. Bring delicious fruits and vegetables from your yard to your table!

Whether you have a large yard or just a patio to work with, here are several ways to create a productive garden.

Raised or in-ground gardens

Soil preparation is the most important step in creating a productive garden. Soil pH and fertility can affect plant production and even affect how your produce tastes. Kitchen compost and worm castings are effective for adding nutrients and soil structure in your garden. Pine bark fines (partially composted pine bark) can be used to condition heavy soils and promote root growth. Avoid using peat moss; peat harvested from sphagnum bogs destroys fragile ecosystems and releases stored carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

In an in-ground garden, use building blocks turned on their side to contain aggressive species such as garlic and mint.

Perennials such as asparagus, rhubarb, sage, and thyme are great choices for your garden. Their production often increases with each growing season.



Container gardens

Whiskey barrels make great containers to combine tomatoes, okra, squash, and marigolds to create a small garden right on your deck. In the spring, turn the soil in your whiskey barrel with a shovel to aerate it and redistribute nutrients evenly throughout the container.

Container gardens can be used to create attractive arrangements year after year. The opportunities to be creative are endless. You might incorporate flowers such as pentas and angelonia to attract pollinators and hummingbirds.

Don't forget your furry friends! Catnip will overwinter in a container for your pet to enjoy year after year.



Straw bales

These are inexpensive and ideal for gardeners with limited space. A variety of vegetables can be grown together in a single bale. Raised straw bale gardening also help prevent diseases in the soil from spreading to your plants.



April 2019



August 2019

Additional Resources:

[What's in Bloom in the Triangle](#)

[Children's Garden Activities and Information Sheets](#) UK Royal Horticultural Society

[Planting and Harvesting Guide for Piedmont Vegetables and Herbs](#) NC Extension

[Straw Bale Gardening](#) Clemson Cooperative Extension

[Raised Beds](#) Clemson Cooperative Extension

[Web Resources for Sustainable Production](#) NC Extension

[Composting](#) Clemson Cooperative Extension

[Benefits of Mulching](#) Clemson Cooperative Extension

[NC Master Gardeners](#)

[Adding Perennials to Your Vegetable Garden](#) Southern Exposure Seed Exchange