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**The world's best
88 garden
hacks & tips**



Note:

The advice and techniques provided and shown in this guide are general techniques for various applications. In some instances, additional techniques not described in this guide may be required. Always follow the instructions in user manuals included with products. Deviating from such instructions may result in injuries and damages. Consult your local government agencies for information on codes and other laws as applicable to your project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Soil preparation and planting	5
Watering and irrigation.....	6
Plant care.....	7
Pest and disease management	9
Ecological gardening.....	10
Garden tools and techniques.....	11
Harvest and storage	12
Creative gardening ideas	13
Time saving and efficiency.....	14
Resourceful gardening	14
Garden maintenance.....	15

The world's best 88 garden hacks & tips

From ever since I can remember, I have always had a passion for gardening. This was instilled in me from a very early age by my parents, who would always be gardening in their spare time. If we ever moved to a new house, my father would immediately plot out an area of the lawn that he would dig up and turn into a vegetable garden.

My father, my daughter and I collecting firewood!



My father and my daughter Sofia harvesting potatoes!



Originally from Ireland, the first thing he planted was his favourite vegetable: „potatoes“. The best time of the year for him was harvesting them with his children... and later on with his grandchildren. We would also have family growing competitions, where we would each grow our own tomato plants. We would each individually care for our own plant from seed to harvest, and would see who would win for the best-looking tomatoes and the biggest yield. This was a lot of fun, and a great way for the children to develop a passion for gardening.

There is something truly gratifying about growing a seed into a fully grown, healthy, beautifully bountiful plant. But learning the skills to get to that point takes time.

Here I present 88 of the best garden hacks, secrets, tips and tricks that I have picked up over the years to help you become a more successful and resourceful gardener.

Soil preparation and planting

1

Soil testing: Before you even think about planting, understanding your soil is paramount. Test its pH and nutrient levels, in order to set out a roadmap to success. This simple step can make all the difference, ensuring that the stage is set for your plants to thrive.

2

Amending the soil: Think of your soil as a canvas, and the compost, well-rotted manure and organic matter as the paint. Enrich the texture, structure and fertility of your soil, providing a nutrient banquet for your plants, then watch them flourish.

3

Mulching: It's like tucking your plants in with a cosy blanket. A layer of mulch not only retains precious moisture, keeping your plants hydrated, but also suppresses those pesky weeds, and regulates soil temperature, creating a comfortable environment for your plants.

4

Double-digging: Consider this a rejuvenating massage for your soil. Breaking up compacted soil, allowing air and water to circulate more freely, is the foundation for a thriving garden. Deep-rooted plants will thank you for this improved drainage.

5

Lasagna gardening: The art of layering creates a feast for soil-dwelling organisms. Leaves, newspaper, compost; a symphony of organic materials enriches the planting bed, nurturing your plants as they reach for the sky.

6

No-dig gardening: A gentle approach, respecting the intricate underground world of your garden. By minimizing soil disturbance, you create a haven for beneficial microbes, preserving soil structure, and maintaining the delicate balance that nature intended.

7

Raised beds: Elevate your gardening experience, quite literally. Raised beds provide excellent drainage, enhanced soil quality, and a more accessible gardening space. It's like giving your plants a VIP area in which to thrive.

8

Square-foot gardening: The art of optimization. By dividing your beds into square-foot areas, you'll learn to utilize every inch efficiently, creating a harmonious tapestry of plants, leaving no space wasted.



9

Companion planting: Picture plants as social beings, sharing secrets and helping each other grow. Companion planting is a magical dance of compatible crops - nature's pest control, growth enhancers, and space savers all rolled into one. Some examples are: Tomato and basil, which are natural companions in the kitchen and garden. Basil repels certain insect pests such as thrips, and disorients the moths that lay tomato hornworms. Aphids can significantly damage your crops, but they're repelled by garlic. Keep this in mind when planting: surround vulnerable crops with garlic, such as planting potatoes in between rows of garlic, creating a protective and aromatic barrier.

10

Succession planting: The garden never rests, and neither should your space. By planting new crops as others are harvested, you're making the most of every precious inch, ensuring a continuous harvest, and putting your garden real estate to good use.

Watering and irrigation

11

Drip irrigation: This is precision watering at its finest, delivering hydration directly to your plant's roots. Wastage is minimized, and your plants get the VIP treatment they deserve.

12

Soaker hoses: It's like your plants are drinking through a straw. Lay these hoses along plant rows, and they'll ensure that the water is delivered precisely where it's needed, making your garden the picture of efficiency.

13

Water deeply: It's a lesson in patience, my friend. Watering deeply but less frequently encourages your plants to develop deep, resilient roots, ensuring their survival even in the harshest of times.

14

Morning watering: Ah, the gentle kiss of morning dew. By watering your plants early, you minimize evaporation, giving your plants ample time to absorb the moisture, and preventing fungal diseases that can plague a humid evening.



15

Rain butts: Capture the gift of the heavens themselves. Collect rainwater, nature's perfect elixir, and watch your plants respond with vibrant health. Not to mention the sweet satisfaction of a reduced water bill.

16

Self-watering containers: These containers are like mini caretakers, ensuring your plants never feel thirsty. Consistent moisture levels mean happy, thriving plants, and you'll be free from the guilt of missed watering sessions.

17

Mulch mats: Picture these as little moisture-saving coasters for your plants. By placing them around your plants, you conserve the precious moisture and, as a bonus, weeds find it challenging to gain a foothold.

18

Watering spikes: A direct deposit of water. These spikes ensure the hydration goes straight to the roots, bypassing any obstacles or detours. Your plants will thank you for this efficient system.

19

Hydrogel crystals: Imagine tiny water reservoirs in your soil, releasing moisture slowly, ensuring a steady supply for your plants. These crystals are a lifesaver, reducing the frequency of your watering sessions.

Plant care

20

Deadheading: A simple act that looks like a magic trick. By removing faded flowers, you're not just tidying up; you're sending a message to the plant to keep the blooms coming. A continuous celebration of beauty.

21

Pinching: Think of it as giving your plants a little haircut, and they love it! By pinching off the tips of young plants, you encourage bushier growth, creating lush, full plants that are a joy to behold.

22

Pruning: The sculptor's touch in the garden. Prune away the dead or diseased branches, and watch as your plants breathe easier, with better air circulation, and a renewed zest for life.



23

Staking: It's like giving your plants a strong shoulder to lean on. Tall or top-heavy plants need support to avoid breakage. Show them some love, and they'll stand tall, ready to face the world.

24

Thinning: It's a bit like plant parenting. Sometimes, your seedlings just need a little space to grow and flourish. By thinning out overcrowded seedlings, you're giving them room to shine.

25

Fertilizing: It's the nutrient boost your plants crave. Balanced fertilizers or compost are like a gourmet meal for your plants, ensuring they have all the essential nutrients they need to reach their full potential.

26

Foliar feeding: Imagine nourishing your plants directly through their skin. Spray diluted liquid fertilizer directly onto leaves to boost nutrient absorption. This method boosts nutrient absorption, giving your plants a quick pick-me-up when they need it most.

27

Epsom salts: It's like a spa treatment for your plants. Epsom salts as a magnesium supplement can work wonders, improving flowering and fruiting, making your plants feel pampered.

28

Coffee grounds: The magical elixir from your morning ritual has a second life in your garden. Sprinkle these grounds around your plants, and they'll thank you with improved soil structure and added nutrients.

29

Manure tea: It's like herbal tea, but for your plants. Steep well-rotted manure in water, and you've got a nutrient-rich liquid fertilizer that your garden will love.



Pest and disease management



30

Integrated pest management (IPM): A form of garden diplomacy. By combining biological, cultural, and chemical methods you're maintaining a delicate balance; managing pests while safeguarding your plants and the environment.

31

Beneficial insects: Invite some heroes into your garden. Ladybirds, lacewings, and other beneficial insects are natural guardians, keeping pest populations in check and maintaining harmony in your garden.

32

Neem oil: A defence against a wide array of garden foes. Use neem oil as an organic insecticide and fungicide, protecting your plants while being gentle on the environment.

33

Diatomaceous earth: A silent assassin for crawling insects. This powdery substance controls pests, keeping them at bay, and ensuring your garden's peace and tranquility.

34

Row covers: A veil of protection for your plants. Row covers keep flying insects out, while allowing sunlight and air circulation. It's the garden's version of a fortress.

35

Yellow sticky traps: Lure in pests with the irresistible allure of yellow. These traps catch flying insects, saving your plants from the clutches of whiteflies, aphids, and other unwanted guests.

36

Garlic and pepper spray: The secret sauce that deters pests. Make your homemade spray using crushed garlic and hot peppers, and watch the pests retreat.

37

Beer traps: An invitation to a party for slugs and snails. Bury containers of beer in the soil, and these troublesome creatures will meet their foamy fate.

38

Interplanting herbs: The garden's version of a perfume counter. Plant aromatic herbs like basil, mint and rosemary to repel insects, ensuring a fragrant and pest-free environment for your vulnerable plants.

39

Quarantine: A garden equivalent of social distancing. Isolate new plants for a few weeks, giving you time to check for pests and diseases before they can spread to the rest of your garden.



Ecological gardening

40

No-till gardening: The garden's way of saying „hands-off!“ . Avoid tilling the soil, and you preserve the delicate balance of beneficial organisms and maintain soil structure, creating a haven for your plants.

41

Biodiversity: Think of it as a garden party with a diverse guest list. Planting a wide range of crops promotes ecological balance, reducing the pressure of pests and diseases, and ensuring a vibrant and resilient garden.

42

Home-made insecticides: It's like creating magic potions. With simple ingredients like soap, baking soda and vegetable oils, you can craft natural insecticides that keep pests in check, without harming the environment.



43

Milk spray: The secret to keeping fungal diseases at bay. Diluted milk sprayed on your plants acts as a protective shield, preventing the onset of powdery mildew and other fungi.

44

Molasses spray: A treat for your soil's microbial party. Use molasses to create a foliar spray that encourages beneficial microbial activity, improving soil health while nourishing your plants.

45

Crop rotation: A strategic game for your plants. By rotating crops, you're outsmarting soilborne diseases, ensuring the health of your garden for years to come.

46

Vermicomposting: The ultimate recycling program for your garden. Worms convert kitchen scraps into nutrient-rich worm castings, a natural and potent fertilizer that your plants will love.



Garden tools and techniques

47

Sharp tools: The gardener's best friend. Keep your tools sharp for efficient cutting, preventing unnecessary stress on your plants, and making your gardening tasks a breeze.

48

Tool maintenance: A little care goes a long way. Regularly cleaning and oiling your tools not only prevents rust, but ensures they remain reliable partners in your gardening journey.

49

Tool sanitization: Think of it as a garden health precaution. Disinfect pruners and shears between plants to prevent the spread of diseases, ensuring your garden remains a thriving haven.

50

Garden journal: A chronicle of your garden's journey. Keep a garden journal, noting planting dates, successes and challenges. It will act as a treasure trove of knowledge for future seasons.

51

DIY seed starting: You're like a plant midwife. Create biodegradable seed starters using newspaper pots or egg cartons, giving your seeds a safe and nurturing environment to sprout.

52

Hardening off: A delicate process, but worth the effort. Gradually acclimate seedlings to outdoor conditions, allowing them to transition smoothly to the garden environment.

53

Vertical gardening: It's like a botanical art installation. Train your plants to grow vertically on trellises, arbors and supports, saving space while creating an enchanting visual display.

54

Winter sowing: Planting with foresight. Sow seeds outdoors in containers during winter, giving them a head start for the upcoming spring, and ensuring a robust start to the growing season.

55

Pallet gardens: Transforming humble pallets into vertical gardens is a stroke of genius. It's a creative way to grow herbs, flowers and small vegetables, maximizing space while adding a touch of rustic charm.

Harvest and storage

56

Timing harvesting: It's all about the timing. Harvest fruits and vegetables at their peak ripeness, ensuring the best flavour and quality as the sweet reward for your gardening efforts.

57

Cut-and-come-again: It's a gift that keeps on giving. Harvest leafy greens and herbs by cutting outer leaves, allowing the plant to regrow and provide you with a continuous supply of fresh delights.

58

Using shears: A delicate touch for delicate plants. Use shears to harvest herbs and flowers without damaging the plant, showing them the respect they deserve.

59

Proper storage: Treat your harvest like a fine treasure. Store fruits and vegetables in cool, dark, and well-ventilated areas, extending their shelf life and ensuring your garden's bounty lasts.

60

Canning: Preserving the essence of summer. When you have an excess harvest, canning fruits and vegetables in jars lets you savour those flavours even in the coldest of months.

61

Drying: The art of preservation through time. Dry herbs, flowers, chillis and certain fruits for culinary use, creating a well-stocked pantry filled with your garden's goodness.

62

Freezing: Capture the freshness in ice. Blanch and freeze vegetables like peas, beans and corn, so you can enjoy the taste of summer all year round.

63

Fermenting: Transforming vegetables into tangy delights. Ferment cabbage into sauerkraut, and you don't just add flavour, but also health benefits to your plate.

64

Seed saving: You're preserving a piece of history. Saving seeds from open-pollinated plants ensures the legacy of your garden, allowing it to be planted in future seasons.

65

Preserving herbs: Elevating herbs to new heights. Create herb-infused oils, vinegars and herbal salts, capturing the essence of your garden for culinary adventures.

Creative gardening ideas



66

Vertical succulents wall: It's a living work of art. Build a vertical wall of succulents, a stunning display that also saves space, making a statement in your garden.

67

Garden sculptures: Give your garden a touch of elegance. Integrating sculptures, ornaments and artworks adds an artistic flair, turning your garden into a masterpiece.

68

Recycled planters: A tribute to creativity and sustainability. Repurposing old containers, boots and furniture into unique planters brings a unique charm to your garden.

69

Terrariums: Tiny ecosystems under glass. Enclosed terrariums with glass containers and small plants are self-contained worlds of beauty and fascination.

70

Garden pathways: A journey through your garden. Design pathways using gravel, stepping stones or woodchips, ensuring easy access while adding a touch of aesthetics to your outdoor space.

71

Mini greenhouses: Extend the growing season. Create mini greenhouses using clear plastic containers, or used plastic bottles to protect your precious seedlings and extend the growing period.

72

Colour-themed gardens: Like a painting brought to life. Design gardens with specific colour palettes, evoking different moods and aesthetics, transforming your garden into a living canvas.

73

Scent gardens: Your nose knows the aroma, and can't resist its allure. Plant fragrant herbs and flowers to create sensory-rich gardens, enchanting visitors with captivating scents.

74

Moonlight gardens: Gardens that come alive at night. Grow white and silver plants that reflect moonlight, creating a tranquil and enchanting nighttime garden.

Time saving and efficiency

75

Garden zones: Think of them as organizational masterpieces. Organize your garden into zones based on sun exposure, water needs and plant types, streamlining your gardening efforts.

76

Bulk planting: It's like a well-orchestrated dance. Planting in rows or blocks not only makes maintenance easier but also streamlines your harvesting, ensuring an efficient use of your garden space.

77

Garden path grid: Like playing chess with plants. Lay out a grid of paths, granting you access to your plants without compacting the soil in the planting beds.

78

Tool organizer: A place for everything, and everything in its place. Hang tools on a pegboard or install a tool rack, ensuring easy access and organization, so you're always ready for your gardening tasks.

79

Garden cart: Your trusty steed in the garden. Use a garden cart or wheelbarrow to transport tools, soil and plants around the garden, saving you time and energy.

80

Garden Gloves: Protect your hands; your most essential tool as a gardener. Invest in durable and comfortable gloves, ensuring your hands are protected during all your gardening adventures.

81

Garden clock: It's the metronome of your garden symphony. Install a clock in your garden to keep track of time and manage your gardening tasks with precision.

Resourceful gardening

82

Plant swaps: Sharing the garden love. Exchange excess plants with neighbours or friends, diversifying your garden without spending a penny, all while building a sense of community.

83

Seed exchanges: Like a treasure hunt for gardeners. Join local or online seed exchange groups, trading seeds with fellow gardening enthusiasts, expanding your plant variety.

84

Regrowing kitchen scraps: A second chance for kitchen scraps. Grow new plants from green onion roots, lettuce cores, and sweet potato vines, reducing waste and creating new life.

85

Garden freebies: Nature's gifts for your garden. Collect fallen leaves, twigs, and other natural materials from your garden for composting or mulching, utilizing resources already at hand.

Garden maintenance

86

Grass-free borders: Simplify your life, reduce the trimming. Create borders with gravel, stones or mulch, creating a neat and low-maintenance edge to your planting beds.

87

Plant labels: It's like creating nametags for your plant family. Use a durable marker to label your plant with the breed and the date it was planted. This will ensure you can easily identify it and track its growth, making your garden a well-organized paradise.

88

Year-round interest: It's like painting a constantly evolving masterpiece. This is the art of selecting plants that bring beauty and intrigue no matter the season, ensuring that there are no dull moments in your garden's story. From the vibrant blossoms of spring to the lush paradise of summer, the fiery foliage of autumn, and even the serene beauty of winter. A carefully curated mix of plants, each with its unique appeal across the seasons, ensures that your garden remains a captivating haven year-round. With every passing month, your garden transforms, revealing new chapters of its enchanting narrative, leaving you and your visitors in awe as you witness the ever-changing spectacle of nature's beauty.

With these 88 garden hacks, secrets, tips, and tricks, you're well-equipped to embark on a gardening journey filled with joy, satisfaction and bountiful harvests. Don't forget to celebrate the progress in how far you and garden have come. Take time to appreciate your garden's growth and the rewards of your efforts. Happy gardening, my friend!
May your garden thrive and bring you endless moments of delight.

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