

Patio Gardening

Gardens come in all shapes, sizes, and colors. There is everything from perennials, mixed with brilliantly colored annuals, to xeriscape plantings that provide low maintenance options and a mixture of shrubs and dwarf trees.

These unique mini spaces do much in the way of making a garden look welcoming and lived in. And, when it comes to spaces where we plant, patios are king. A patio or small space provides an opportunity to take advantage of replicating what we typically see in a large landscape but without the maintenance hassles.

To get the most from your patio garden, consider these tips to get started or to continue maintaining your patio garden space.

1. Use large pots for plants that mature into huge plants and/or flowers (i.e. tropicals like elephant ears, yuccas and ornamental grasses). The bigger the plant, the larger the pot. It is also important to consider a larger pot for plants that take longer to mature.
2. When planting a fruiting plant (i.e. peppers and tomatoes) use more soil. Fruiting plants are great options for container and patio gardens
3. Make certain to not overcrowd your plants. Go ahead and use a variety in your planter. However, when you crowd them, they tend to grow spindly. You can put one tomato plant in a large planter and have more fruit than planting 3 or more in the same size pot that have leggy, spindly plants that don't produce as much fruit
4. Our Oklahoma summers can be brutal, and most pots get thirsty. Terracotta pots dry out very quickly so you may find that you are watering early morning AND early evening. Try to keep your pots evenly moist and do not let them dry out between waterings.
5. Some pots may not have drainage holes. If this is the case, create a few holes in the bottom to prevent water from sitting in and around the roots of your precious plants. While some people prefer to put gravel, Styrofoam, etc. at the base of their pots before filling them with soil, avoid doing so as it negatively affects drainage. Use the same quality potting soil throughout the pot.
6. If your plants require full sun to help create luscious blooms and your patio lacks light, instead select plants that require low sun like hostas, impatiens, etc.
7. If your patio or space gets a lot of wind, consider surrounding your garden with a windbreak like a nice lattice that you can stain a rich color and place in a strategic location.

8. It is recommended to use a potting mix but make certain it is rich in compost. Many nurseries have developed and sell their own unique blend of potting soil that works well.

So . . . go ahead and plant in containers and watch your garden grow while enjoying the bounty. Whether you have a small or medium space, low light or full sun, gardening in small spaces can be enjoyable, fun, and extremely rewarding.

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