



Preparing Your Herb Garden

For Success

Workbook

*When the flower blooms, the bees come
uninvited. -- RAMAKRISHNA*



I like to encourage people interested in gardening or planting to begin with a simple herb garden. Even if you live in a small apartment, you can have some herb pots.

ANNA GETTY

Module 1: Preparing Your Herb Garden – Know what you are working with.

What is your minimum winter temperature over the last 25 years? _____

What is your USDA Hardiness zone? _____

Go here for more information – [USA and Canada](#)

[World](#)

How long is your growing season?

When is your last expected frost date? _____

When is your first expected frost date? _____

How many days are in between? _____

In the following questions examine the actual length of your growing season for the past 5 years. If you don't know the answer to these questions, you can skip them. But begin this year to keep track. This information will be invaluable to you as you decide which herbs to grow in your garden and which herbs to purchase.

When was your last frost date in 2018? _____

When was your last frost date in 2017? _____

When was your last frost date in 2016? _____

When was your last frost date in 2015? _____

When was your last frost date in 2014? _____

When was your first frost date in 2018? _____

When was your first frost date in 2017? _____



When was your first frost date in 2016? _____

When was your first frost date in 2015? _____

When was your first frost date in 2014? _____

What was the length of your growing season in 2018? _____

What was the length of your growing season in 2017? _____

What was the length of your growing season in 2016? _____

What was the length of your growing season in 2015? _____

What was the length of your growing season in 2014? _____

What is your 5 year average length of your growing season? _____

What is your soil type?

What is your soil type? _____

Your soil type is probably a combination of one of the 6 kinds of soil types.

- Clay
- Sandy
- Silty
- Peaty
- Chalky
- Loamy

What is your average soil pH

To find the pH of your soil, use litmus paper or create a pH test solution using red cabbage.

Red cabbage contains an anthocyanin-based dye that can be used as a pH indicator. It is red, pink, or magenta in acids, (pH < 7), purple in neutral solutions (pH ≈ 7), and ranges from blue to green to yellow in alkaline solutions (pH > 7).



<https://youtu.be/oG-pNRVHsc4>

Red cabbage is not as exact as using pH test strips but can give you an indication if your soil is neutral (purple), slightly acidic (red to reddish purple), or slightly basic (green to blue-green),

What is the pH of your soil? _____ pH

Most vegetables do best in soil that is slightly acidic. 5.5 to 7.5 is the ideal pH range for growing both herbs and vegetables. Blueberries, azaleas, and rhododendrons prefer acidic soil in the 5.5 to 6.5 range. 7 is pH neutral.

Add lime, calcium, composted manure, Epsom salts, or wood ash to increase the pH of soil that is too acidic.

Add coffee grounds, pine needles, peat, urine, or tannin rich leaves to lower the pH of soil that is too alkaline.

In most of North America clay soils tend to be alkaline soils. In the west clay soils tend to be acidic. Check the actual pH of your own soil to know for sure.

Why is pH important?

When the pH is out of range for the needs of a specific plant the plant will have trouble drawing up soil nutrients. This can lead to problems with photosynthesis which will show up as mis-colored or deformed leaves. By adjusting pH the plants are more able to utilize the soil nutrients already in existence in the soil without adding more fertilizer.

Sun Density Map

Draw a picture of your garden. Map the Shaded areas using lines each hour of daylight two days in a row. Record the time with each line.

Calculate the total hours of sunlight that your garden gets in a 24 hour period including morning and afternoon sun.

In 24 hours:

- Full sun – 6+ hours of sunlight
- Part sun / part shade – 3 to 5 hours of sunlight
- Shade – Less than 2 hours of sunlight

Action step: Create a garden journal



Draw Your Garden Features Here:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for drawing garden features. It occupies the central portion of the page below the title.



Module 2: Calculating Moon Cycles for 2019

“The old-time gardeners say, “With the waxing of the moon, the earth exhales. ” When the sap in the plants rise, the force first goes into the growth above ground. Thus, you should do all activities with plants that bear fruit above ground during a waxing moon.

With the waning of the moon, the earth inhales. Then, the sap primarily goes down toward the roots. Thus, the waning moon is a good time for pruning, multiplying, fertilizing, watering, harvesting, and controlling parasites and weeds”

UTE YORK, “Living by the Moon”

Gardening by the Moon is not astrology. It is taking advantage of the natural ebb and flow of water in the soil, which is synced the cycles of the moon, even as the tides are synced.

Waxing Moon

During the New Moon the rains usually come. Plant **annual flowers** and **vegetables that bear crops above ground** during the light, or waxing, of the Moon. Plant herbs where we use the leaves like chive, mint, and lemon balm.

Waning Moon

Plant **flowering bulbs, biennial and perennial flowers**, and **vegetables that bear crops below ground** during the dark, or waning, of the Moon.

Flowering and fruiting perennial herbs are planting during the waning moon. Also herbs that we use the root are planted now.

In other words, plant from the day after the Moon is full until the day before it is new again.

On the day of the full moon and the new moon, do not plant, as seeds tend to rot in the ground because of the large increase in chill and moisture. Use this time for other gardening chores.

Plant perennial herbs on the same day that you would plant tomatoes and peppers in your area. If you would plant them directly in the ground you can safely plant perennial herbs directly in the ground. If you would start them early in the house, under lights, do the same for your perennial herbs, taking into account the specific needs for each plant.

Download the chart with specific herbs and the treatments that they need for successful germination.

Action Step: Plan your herb garden by noting the time to plant each seed and any special treatment your seed needs.



Module 4: Saving herb seed

Which herb will you save for seed? _____

Have you planted at least 10 plants for genetic diversity? _____

Which days did the plant bloom in your garden? _____

Which day was the seed dry enough to harvest _____

How long did you keep the seed indoors before you packaged it? _____

Download the free seed envelope template: <https://joybileefarm.com/diy-envelopes/>

Write down anything else you think is important to remember in this masterclass

What questions do you have for the Q and A at the end of the month?
