



GARDENS & FLOWERS

An Introduction To Organic Gardening

by Esmee McCornall

**You think Organic Gardening is hard?
This book was written to tell you it's not.
Organic Gardening isn't harder than
'normal' Gardening. There are different
rules to obey. That's it. All you have to do
is learn those rules.**

www.GardensAndFlowers.net

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Written and published by Esmee McCornall

Email: EsmeeMC@gmail.com

www.gardensandflowers.net

www.gardensandflowers.info (weblog)

This is important so you'd better read it...

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Disclaimer

I've strived to be as accurate and complete as possible in the creation of this report, notwithstanding the fact that I do not warrant or represent at any time that the contents within are accurate.

This book is a common sense guide to gardening and creating the garden you always wanted. In practical advice books there are no guarantees of success. You are cautioned to rely on your own judgment about your individual circumstances to act accordingly.

Introduction and a fair warning...

When it comes to gardening, there is no “one size fits all”. And that’s the good news! Not only can your garden become as unique as a fingerprint, it can say a lot about you.

Your garden can reflect your bold and splashy side, or it can compliment your tranquil nature. A garden can bring out the chaotic artist in you, or be the perfect way for you to exercise your organization skills.

What ever your personality, you can grow a garden that suits you perfectly. All it takes is a bit of planning (and work) to ensure you have a garden you’ll enjoy for years to come.

I don’t know your level of experience or skills. Maybe you are a seasoned gardener. Maybe a Newbie. Whatever, I feel privileged you took the trouble to download this report. I sincerely hope it inspires you.

You see, that’s the coolest thing about gardening; you can turn any yard into your own piece of Paradise. There are no limits of what you can do, and except some basic rules set by Mother Nature Herself, there are no rules. You decide. You design. You create. All it takes is some work, love, and dedication...

Organic Gardening is game on it’s own. I like it. A lot. When it comes to Organic Gardening it’s just me and Mother Nature. It’s gardening like gardening should be. It’s gardening like it used to be ages ago. It’s soil, it’s seeds, it’s nature, it’s skills and nothing else.

A lot of people seem to think Organic Gardening is too hard for ordinary gardeners. I'm here to tell you it's not. Organic Gardening isn't harder than 'normal' Gardening. There are different rules to obey. That's it. All you have to do is learn those rules.

I won't lie to you. Although Organic Gardening isn't hard, it can however be extremely frustrating. Trust me, you'll encounter problems that can be solved in two different ways:

- the slow and hard way: work
- the fast and easy way: spray some chemicals

What will you do? How strong will you be? Will you eat your frustration and start working or will you lose faith and get some chemicals out?

It's up to you...

A lot of people seem to think that Organic Gardening is challenging Mother Nature. Like She is the enemy, trying to ruin your plants. Excuse my French, but that's plain BS. As a matter of fact it's obvious that Mother Nature loves Organic Gardening. Because it's clean, honest and protects 'her' soil. But she just isn't going to change the rules because you respect her assets. She'll still throw a fair amount of weeds your way. That's not a challenge, that's a test.

Okay, let's get our hands dirty!

Esmee McCornall

An Introduction to Organic Gardening

Organic gardening is the process of growing plants, flowers, vines, trees, bushes, shrubs, fruits, vegetables and anything else you can think of in a completely natural way. In other words: Mother Nature Rules: no pesticides, chemicals or harmful substances are used in the entire gardening process. Organic gardening is most used for fruit, vegetable, and herb gardening, because people don't want to have pesticides and chemicals on the foods they eat. But it is getting more and popular in mainstream gardens as well.

Where do we start?

Well, we start at the bottom. The soil. Or more specific, with the preparation of your soil. Since you won't be using chemical fertilizers in your organic garden, you'll need to make sure you're soil is as healthy as it can be, so that it can provide all the nutrition your garden plants will need as they grow. Preparing organic garden soil takes a little time and effort, but it's really worth it in the end. And its not difficult at all.

You can create organic garden soil by mixing in healthy rich compost material. Some organic gardeners prefer to create their own compost using special bins or containers. In some places though, you're able to buy organic compost material from other gardeners or garden centers. It's fairly easy to get a start on creating compost though, even without using a special composting bin.

All you need to do is add a few things to your garden bed soil, and let those additives sit for several weeks before you plant. Everything you add to the garden soil should be natural though, because the nutrients are created as these organic items decompose.

First you need to loosen and turn the soil in your garden bed. Then add some organic materials to the bed such as used coffee or tea grounds, sawdust, shredded newspaper, fireplace ashes, or fruit and vegetable matter from your kitchen. You can add one or more of these items at once, but you don't have to add all of them if you don't have them. The smaller you make the material before adding it to the garden bed though, the faster it will turn to compost for you. So if you're using kitchen scraps for instance, try chopping or grating them into smaller bits before tossing them into the garden bed.

After adding the organic material to your garden bed, turn the soil some more so those new items are mixed in and covered decently. Then about two to three times each week, go outside and water the bed, then stir it around a bit again. After about three to four weeks, your bed should be ready to start putting plants or seeds in.

If you prepare your organic garden area in the fall though, before the first hard frost or freeze hits, the soil will be much richer and more ready for planting in the spring.

The Miracle of Companion Plants

When you decide to try your hand at organic gardening, one of the most frustrating parts of the entire process is trying to control pests, diseases,

and other miscellaneous problems without using pesticides, chemicals etc. Thankfully though, there are natural techniques which can be used to solve many of these common gardening problems, and one of those techniques is known as companion planting.

Companion planting is the process of planting specific flowers, herbs, and vegetables together in a way that either enhances the taste of the vegetables, and/or serves to help naturally control common pest and bug related problems in the garden. You do the planting, Mother Nature takes care of the rest. How cool is that!

Companion planting is important and useful for natural garden pest control, but it's also very important in vegetable gardening too. When you decide to plant two or more vegetable plants close together in your garden, you could end up with either a very bad tasting vegetable, or an extremely good one. And how your vegetables taste is dependant upon which companion plants you chose to plant together.

If for instance, you plant basil close to your tomatoes, or put them together into the same container garden, you can enhance the flavor of the tomatoes - particularly when using them to make your famous and delicious home made spaghetti sauce ☺

Chives is an excellent companion plant for roses. Chives can prevent black spot on your lovely roses. They need to be planted near the roses for two or three years before they begin to help prevent this common disease though. Chives also helps to keep aphids away from tomatoes, and they're thought to help keep carrot rust fly's away too.

Planting cabbage with celery, dill, onions or potatoes will benefit all these plants, but trying to plant cabbage too close to tomatoes or strawberries may cause problems with both growth and production.

Marigolds, also known as *Calendula*, are a very common flower to use for repelling pests around your home and garden. These little flowers have been used for this very purpose for centuries. You can scatter them throughout your yard and garden to help repel a variety of common bugs and pests. You need to plant marigolds which have a scent though, or else they won't work to repel the bugs. Some people don't like the scent of marigold flowers either though, so if you've never smelled them yourself, you may want to before planting too many.

Natural Fertilizers

Fertilizing an organic garden is easier than most people think. Just as you can improve the flavor of vegetables by planting certain plants together, and you can help repel common pests, insects and diseases by planting certain plants together, you can also fertilize your garden naturally using specific plants too.

One of the best fertilizers you can use in a garden of course, is compost. And compost is made with all natural, organic materials such as grass clippings, shredded leaves, sawdust, fireplace ash, and even shredded newspapers. You can also toss in fruit and vegetable matter from the kitchen to help your compost become even more rich and fertile for use in any area of your garden.

Besides compost though, you can actually just put certain plants into your garden area to help fertilize the soil, and provide additional nutrients your plants need.

Alfalfa for instance, is a wonderful hardy plant which can survive in almost any conditions, yet it's very high in a large number of vitamins and minerals that are beneficial to your soil in general. Alfalfa will provide your soil with nitrogen, iron, magnesium, phosphorous, and potassium for instance, plus it's long strong roots will help break up hard, rocky, clay like soil too.

German Chamomile is an annual growing herb which will reseed itself each year if you leave some of the flowers unpicked each season. This herb helps contribute calcium, potassium, and sulfur to your soil. It's also excellent for improving the taste of cucumbers, cabbage, and onions. A perennial version is the Roman chamomile, and it will grow in almost any kind of soil with full sunlight.

Clover is an excellent addition to any garden. It has long been considered a source of "green manure" and can be a companion plant to almost anything. In fact, it's particularly useful for increasing the soil fertility of grapes. Clover will attract many beneficial insects to your garden too.

Comfrey is another herb which has wonderful medicinal healing properties, plus it provides your garden soil with calcium, potassium, and phosphorous. This herb likes to grow in moist areas.

Kelp is a natural seaweed which works wonderfully both as a fertilizer and a pest repellent. You can put a natural kelp supplement pill into the

soil near any plants to help them grow more beautifully, and you can even drop one into a flower vase to help your cut flowers live longer. Put kelp into a tea mixture for spraying, and it feeds the plants through their leaves while also repelling a variety of common garden pests and bugs too.

Natural Pest Control

Another thing that new organic gardeners become confused about, and sometimes even frustrated with, is figuring out how to control pests and bugs in their gardens. It doesn't matter if you're growing roses, annuals, perennials, bushes, trees, vegetables or something else... all plants have one or more bugs which seem to like to feed on either the plant leaves and stems, the flowers themselves, or both.

The most natural way to control pests in your garden is extremely time consuming: simply hand pick the bugs off of leaves and flowers as you find them. Thankfully there are many other things you can do to help with the process naturally though.

One step you'll need to take is effective weed control. Be sure to leave enough space between your plantings to allow yourself room to pull up weeds as you see them. In vegetable gardens particularly, it's helpful to leave a wide enough space between the rows which will allow you to take a hoe to the area, because this makes weeding go much faster.

Another natural way to control pests though, is through planting itself. By planting certain herbs and flowers around your garden, you can naturally control and even repel a wide variety of common garden pests.

Elderberry is a plant which can be used to get rid of garden moles. Just stick branches and leaves from this plant down into the mole holes, and they'll leave the garden. You can also make a tea or wash with the leaves from this plant, and it will help repel aphids, carrot root fly, peach tree borers, and cucumber beetles too.

Garlic is another wonderful, all natural repellant for your garden too. The flavor of garlic can be absorbed by other plants though, so don't plant it near any vegetables that might taste bad with a hint of garlic flavor in them.

Lemon Balm is another wonderful, all natural herb which works excellently as a repellant for a variety of things. You can sprinkle lemon balm leaves throughout your garden to repel a number of different bugs and pests, and you can even rub the crushed leaves on your skin to prevent mosquito bites too.

More about Organic Gardening?

Organic gardening is becoming more and more popular, even among newbie gardeners. I keep getting questions about it. I'll try to answer them on my blog (www.gardensandflowers.info) and post articles on my website: www.gardensandflowers.net.

A List of Online Gardening Stores I Use Often

To be honest, I never was much of an online buyer. I just like the atmosphere of an old fashioned Garden Center where you can touch the plants and smell the flowers. And I still go there as often as I can. But for about two years ago, I started to buy online more and more.

Why?

Well, first of all it saves me a lot of time. And time is a precious thing for us Gardoholics.

Probably as important: these days online Gardening Shops are great. They are easy to navigate and you can find (and compare!) anything you are looking for in a matter of seconds.

Like I said, I still just can't drive by a Garden Center without stopping. They are like magnets to me and I hardly ever leave without buying. But when it comes to planning a garden or even just a new section of it, the internet became my best friend.

Well... enough talk. Let's start shopping ☺

Outdoor and Garden Products

Hey, I'm not just a Gardoholic but a Yardiatic too, so Yardiatic.com is where I buy most of my stuff online. They run a cool and easy to navigate website which saves me a lot of time finding what I'm looking for. Visit Yardiatic here: www.gardensandflowers.net/Yardiatic

Plants and Flowers:

1 - Ok, now you know – this is where my money goes ☺. Name a perennial, a tiny little flower or a BIG tree and they ship it straight into your backyard. I never leave their website without checking 'New Products' and (of course) "Clearance Save 50%". But they have a great Gift Section too. See for yourself: www.gardensandflowers.net/Nature

1 – This is an online garden store I always check when I'm online. I'm cheap and always looking for a bargain, so I'm a big fan of their OneCentSales. What it comes down to is a Buy One – Get One concept. You buy (for example) freesias, 12 for \$3.98 and get your next set of 12 freesias for just 1 (one) cent. Cool huh! Cheap too? Go here and feel great: www.gardensandflowers.net/Direct

Garden Ornaments:

1 - This is my little secret when it comes to historical and antique replicas. Sculptures, garden furniture, ornaments and statuary which you won't find anywhere else! If you are looking for something special, this is the place to go: www.gardensandflowers.net/Design

2 – Here is another website I visit when I am looking for sculptures and so on. They have some great and even some really weird garden

statues, garden decor, Italian statuary, angels, cherubs, and busts. In for a surprise? Following this link: www.gardensandflowers.net/Accents

Garden Tools:

If you are on a budget, hide your credit card before clicking the link that follows – you'll get greedy! A website loaded with a really cool collection of garden tools. Get greedy: www.gardensandflowers.net/Mantis

Bulbs:

1 - My mom's dad is Dutch (which is probably why I spent a fortune on bulbs every year) so I buy most of my bulbs from these guys in the low land. Daffodils. Hyacinths, Irises, Tulips (of course) and many other flowers but don't you ever forget to check their section "Exclusives". Expect to start drawing: www.gardensandflowers.net/Dutch

US based Bulbs ☺

2 - If you don't want your bulbs coming from overseas, this is the place to go. It's America's #1 source on the web for flowering bulbs. Click the link to see why: www.gardensandflowers.net/Blooming

Weather Stuff:

This website offers an array of weather stations, barometers, thermometers, rain gauges, wind and humidity meters. I go there every once in a while to catch up with what is going on in weatherland. To be honest, I'm not a very weather orientated kind'a girl, but I know a lot of people have lots of fun checking their gauges. For them, this place must be heaven: www.gardensandflowers.net/Weather

So every now and then, I stumble upon yet another great online gardening store. An updated list of online garden stores I use can be found at: www.gardensandflowers.net/esmee_is_out_shopping.html