

We Want to Garden But...

How to overcome obstacles to gardening

Prepared by Etobicoke Master Gardeners



Etobicoke Master Gardeners
www.etobickemastergardeners.ca

Presented at: Humber Arboretum



Humber Arboretum
www.humberarboretum.on.ca

Master Gardeners of Ontario



Etobicoke Master Gardeners

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Etobicoke Master Gardeners

Etobicoke Master Gardeners (EMG) was formed in January 2005 and is meant to cover the west side of Toronto and take in those people who want to study for the Master Gardener (MG) designation.

Meetings are held at the [Montgomery Inn](#) on the fourth Wednesday of most months from 7 to 10 p.m.

EMG comprises 36 active members: 26 Master Gardeners (MG) and 10 Master Gardeners in Training (MGIT) who are in the process of studying for Master Gardener Certification. We welcome inquiries from enthusiastic and interested individuals wishing to learn more about joining our



Humber Arboretum



A partnership of:



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Session Topics – What's holding you back?

- ✓ Garden area is too small
- ✓ Garden is too shady/dry/damp
- ✓ Yard is all lawn
- ✓ Soil is not good
- ✓ Don't have enough time/energy
- ✓ It's too expensive
- ✓ Need space for kids/pets
- ✓ Live in an apartment/condo
- ✓ Don't know where/how to start



The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes in various shades of green, primarily concentrated on the right side and bottom of the slide.

Garden area is too small

Gardening in Small Spaces

- ✓ There is no such thing as “*no space*”



How small is your space?





Small Gardens

- ✓ Grow plants anywhere...
- ✓ Garden
- ✓ Porch/steps
- ✓ Flat roof
- ✓ Wall
- ✓ Driveway/patio
- ✓ Balcony
- ✓ Side yard
- ✓ *Plan before you plant*

Design

- ✓ Hardscaping – patio, walls.
- ✓ Furniture - chairs, bench, BBQ
- ✓ Focal point – small pond
- ✓ Room for children or animals
- ✓ Plants – trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals – or food plants
- ✓ Types, size, bloom colour, bloom time



Design for Small Gardens

- *Scale*

How do you visually expand your space?

- ✓ Mirrors
- ✓ Archways
- ✓ Extra rooms
- ✓ 'Borrowed views'
 - ✓ Neighbouring properties
 - ✓ Into your residence



Tiny Garden Techniques

Lots of options:

- ✓ Container Gardening
 - ✓ Don't forget hanging baskets
 - ✓ You can make your own
- ✓ Raised beds
- ✓ Terracing/tiers
- ✓ Vertical Gardening.



gardeningknowhow.com/special/containers/upside-down-gardening.htm

Small Space Design - Vertical Gardens

- ✓ Stand-alone
- ✓ Walls, fence, gate, balcony



Espaliered apple tree

<https://www.ogmlandscape.com/the-art-of-shaping-trees-pleaching-and-espalier/>



Vertical Gardening

- ✓ Vertical pallet gardens are good for small spaces
- ✓ Use natural wood
- ✓ Other materials are easy to obtain – landscape fabric, staple gun and staples, potting soil and plants
- ✓ Use lots of staples!
- ✓ 5 or 6 plants per level
- ✓ Leave flat for two weeks
- ✓ Be safe



Vertical gardens - Custom systems

Buy a garden to fit your space...



...or make one yourself



Vertical Gardening in action



← Before

After →



Or...maximize production



Square Foot Gardening

- ✓ Easier to protect from the elements and pests
- ✓ Crop rotation can be implemented
- ✓ Needs care (water)



Other easy options



Source: containergardening.wordpress.com

Containers



Containers – Things to consider



- ✓ Container
- ✓ Potting medium
- ✓ Water
- ✓ Fertilizer
- ✓ Plant choice

Containers

Containers give you the freedom to turn your paved areas into lush jungles...



... Frequent changes are possible

Containers

- ✓ Experiment. Try new plants
- ✓ *Dicentra scandens* →
- ✓ Assorted *Amaranthus* cultivars ↓



Everything in one place...

- ✓ The Carrot Green Roof (Danforth and Chester) has everything
- ✓ Containers
- ✓ Pallet gardens
- ✓ Trellises/Pergolas
- ✓ Shallow raised beds
- ✓ Water feature

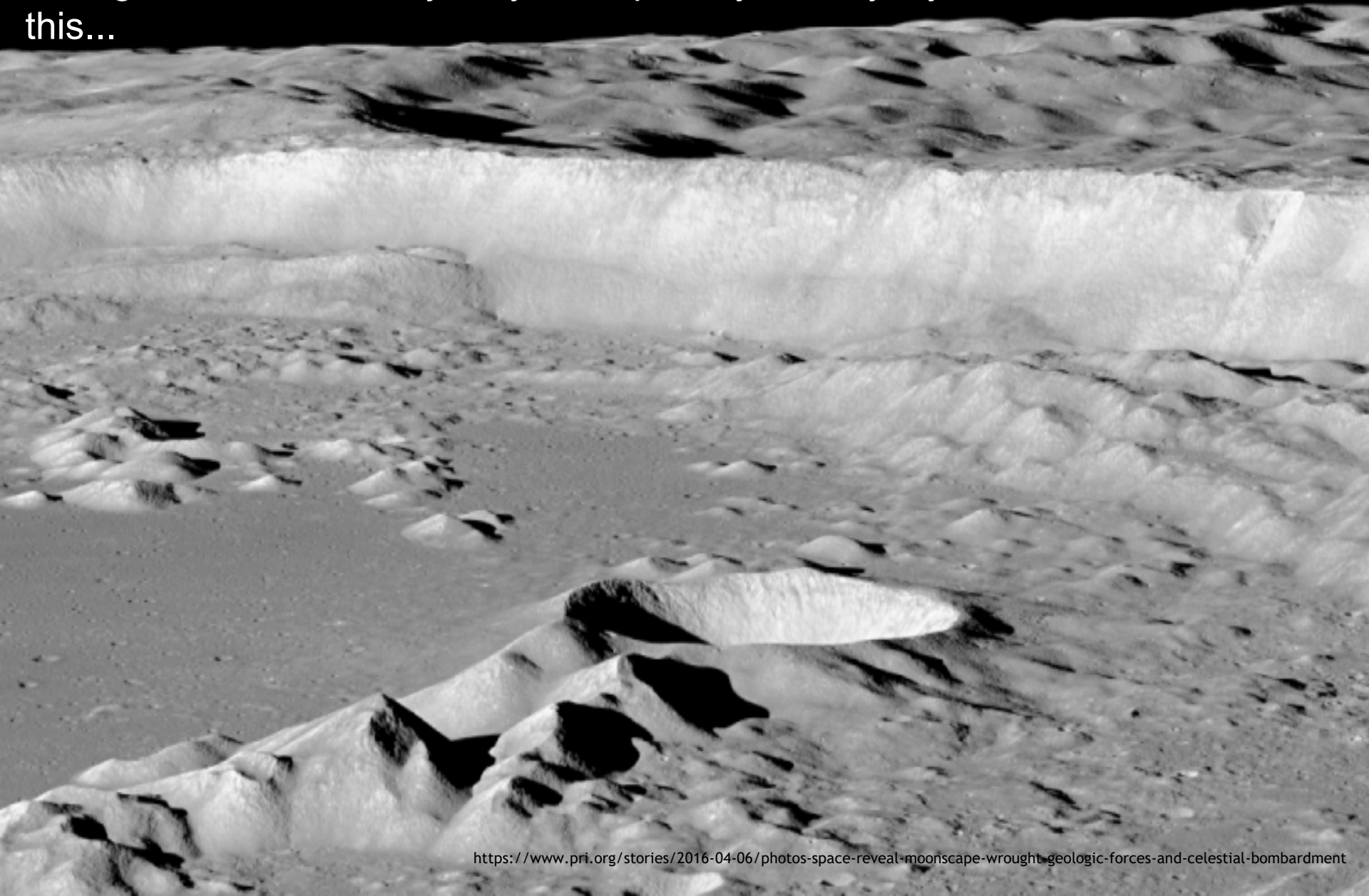


<https://www.blogto.com/city/2018/06/toronto-greenroof-and-patio-hidden-plain-sight/>

Garden is too shady/dry/damp

Poor Conditions

Your garden is too shady / dry / damp / clay / sandy if you look out and see this...



Conditions

Make a note of...

- ✓ Sun or shade?
- ✓ Wet or dry?
- ✓ Flat or sloped?
- ✓ Windy or not?

Rule #1 = small plants

- ✓ They need to fit the space
- ✓ They need to fit the conditions
- ✓ “The right plant for the right place”





Conditions

- ✓ Choose plants for your conditions.
 - ✓ Trees and shrubs should fit the space
 - ✓ Try to fill your needs with native plants
 - ✓ Plant with Natives
- ✓ Think about:
 - ✓ Size when mature
 - ✓ Bloom colour
 - ✓ Bloom period
 - ✓ Fall colour
 - ✓ Grouping with other plants

Water

Conditions to consider:

- ✓ Type of garden
- ✓ Access to water
- ✓ Irrigation method
- ✓ Garden size
- ✓ Budget
- ✓ Environmental concerns
- ✓ New gardens require frequent watering

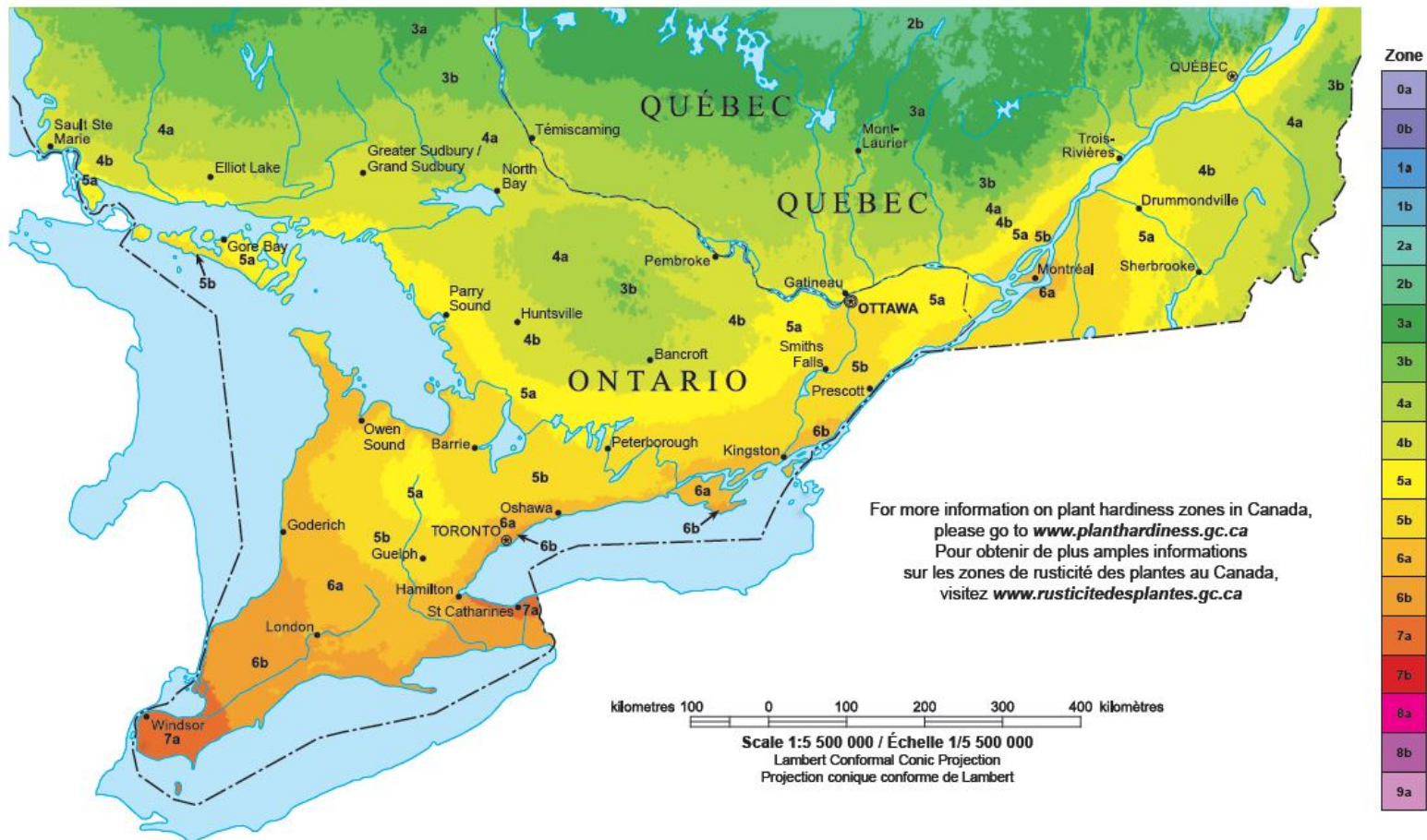


Determine your Canadian Plant Hardiness Zone



Natural Resources Canada / Ressources naturelles Canada

Plant Hardiness Zones of Southern Ontario and Québec Zones de rusticité des plantes dans le sud de l'Ontario et du Québec



Research by / Recherche : D.W. McKenney, J.H. Pedlar, K. Lawrence, P. Papadopol, K. Campbell, M.F. Hutchinson
Produced by / Production : R.E. Kramers, I. Rose, N. Morisset
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Canada

Visit <http://www.planthardiness.gc.ca/> to determine your hardiness zone

Plants for shade

Perennials:

- ✓ **Virginia Bluebells** (*Mertensia virginica*)
- ✓ **Bleeding Heart** (*Dicentra spectabilis*)
- ✓ **Foamflower** (*Tiarella cordifolia*)
- ✓ **Golden Alexanders** (*Zizia aurea*)
- ✓ Hostas
- ✓ False Goat's Beard (*Astilbe* x)
- ✓ Coral Bells (*Heuchera* x)
- ✓ Lady's Mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*)

Native plants in **Bold**.



Some native shade plants



Shade Plants....in containers

Examples:

- ✓ Foliage Begonias
- ✓ Persian Shield
- ✓ Coleus
- ✓ Giant Taro



Hostas



Plants for Shady Dry Areas

- ✓ **Geranium** (*Geranium maculatum*)
- ✓ **Solomon's Seal** (*Polygonatum biflorum*)
- ✓ **Columbine** (*Aquilegia canadensis*)
- ✓ **Salal** (*Gaultheria procumbens*)
- ✓ **Foxglove beardtongue** (*Penstemon digitalis*)
- ✓ **Goat's Beard** (*Aruncus Dioicus*)
- ✓ **LungWort** (*Pulmonaria*)
- ✓ **Fleeceflower** (*Persicaria polymorpha*)
- ✓ **Bishop's Hat/Barrenwort** (*Epimedium*)



Plants for Hot Dry areas

- ✓ **Blanket flower** (*Gaillardia*)
- ✓ **Coneflower** (*Echinacea*)
- ✓ **Gay Feather/Blazing Star** (*Liatris*)
- ✓ **Aster** (*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*)
- ✓ Yucca
- ✓ Sea Holly (*Eryngium*)
- ✓ Russian Sage (*Perovskia*)
- ✓ Gasplant (*Dictamnus albus*)
- ✓ Cornflower (Mountain
Bluet/Bachelor's Buttons/
Centaurea Montana)



Plants for Hot Dry areas



Plants for Damp Areas

- ✓ **Lady Fern** (*Athyrium felix-femina*)
- ✓ **Cardinal Flower** (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
- ✓ **Blue Lobelia** (*Lobelia siphilitica*)
- ✓ **Joe Pye-Weed** (*Eutrochium maculatum*)
- ✓ **Ironweed** (*Vernonia novaboracensis*)
- ✓ **Creeping Jenny** (*Lysimachia nummularia*)
- ✓ **Siberian Iris** (*Iris siberica*)
- ✓ **Meadowsweet** (*Filipendula ulmaria*)
- ✓ **Globeflower** (*Trollius*)
- ✓ *Ligularia* spp.



Plants for Damp Areas

- ✓ Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
- ✓ Ironweed (*Vernonia novaboracensis*)



Plants for Damp Areas

✓ Spotted Joe Pye-Weed (*Eutrochium maculatum*)



Plants for Clay Soil

- ✓ **Black-Eyed Susans** (*Rudbeckia spp*)
- ✓ **Foamflower** (*Tiarella*)
- ✓ **Geranium** (*Geranium spp*)
- ✓ **Bergamot** (*Monarda fistulosa*)
- ✓ **Yarrow** (*Achillea*)
- ✓ **Day Lilies** (*Hemerocallis*)
- ✓ **Siberian Bugloss** (*Brunnera*)



Plants for Sandy Soil

- ✓ **Butterfly Weed** (*Asclepius tuberosa*)
- ✓ Mugwort/Wormwood (*Artemisia*)
- ✓ Cinquefoil (*Potentilla*)
- ✓ Spurge (*Euphorbia*)
- ✓ Thyme
- ✓ Phlox
- ✓ Larkspur (*Delphinium*)
- ✓ Lavender (*Lavandula*)



Climbers - Clematis

- ✓ Most are easy care, just prune in spring or fall
- ✓ Disease resistant
- ✓ Hardy



Annuals

- ✓ Annuals can be selected for all of the conditions outlined above

Examples.

- ✓ Begonias
- ✓ Impatiens
- ✓ Snapdragons

Benefits:

- ✓ Long-lasting colour
- ✓ Flexible
- ✓ Augment primary plant choices



Remember... It does not have to be heavy on plants



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Yard is all lawn

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All lawn ?

- ✓ Dig out small sections each year
- ✓ Consider raised beds, and lasagna gardens
- ✓ Remember to start small...



Raised Beds



“Lasagna Garden”



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Soil is not good

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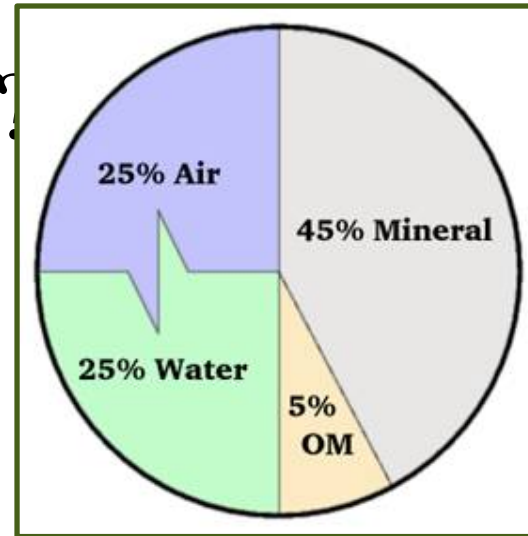
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Soil is not good!

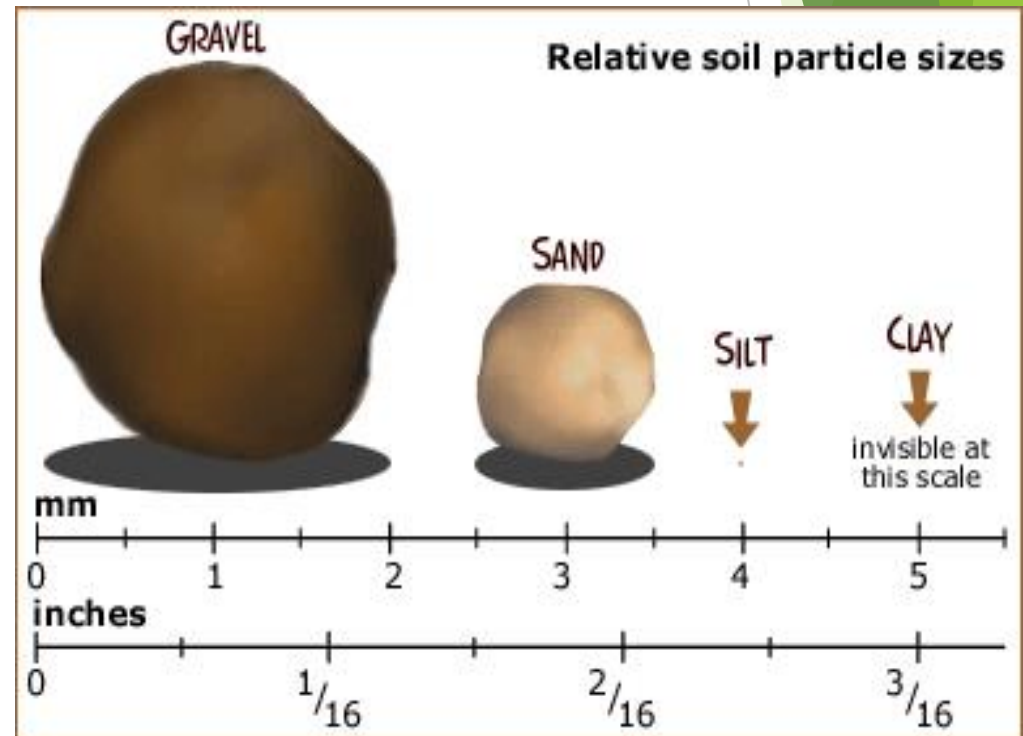


What is Soil made of?

- ✓ Weathered rock!
- ✓ This breaks down into
 - ✓ Sand
 - ✓ Silt
 - ✓ Clay
- ✓ Water and Air
- ✓ Organic matter
- ✓ Micro-organisms



https://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/mauisoil/a_comp.aspx



<http://www.mysmartgarden.org.au/en/Resources/Food/Know-thy-soils>

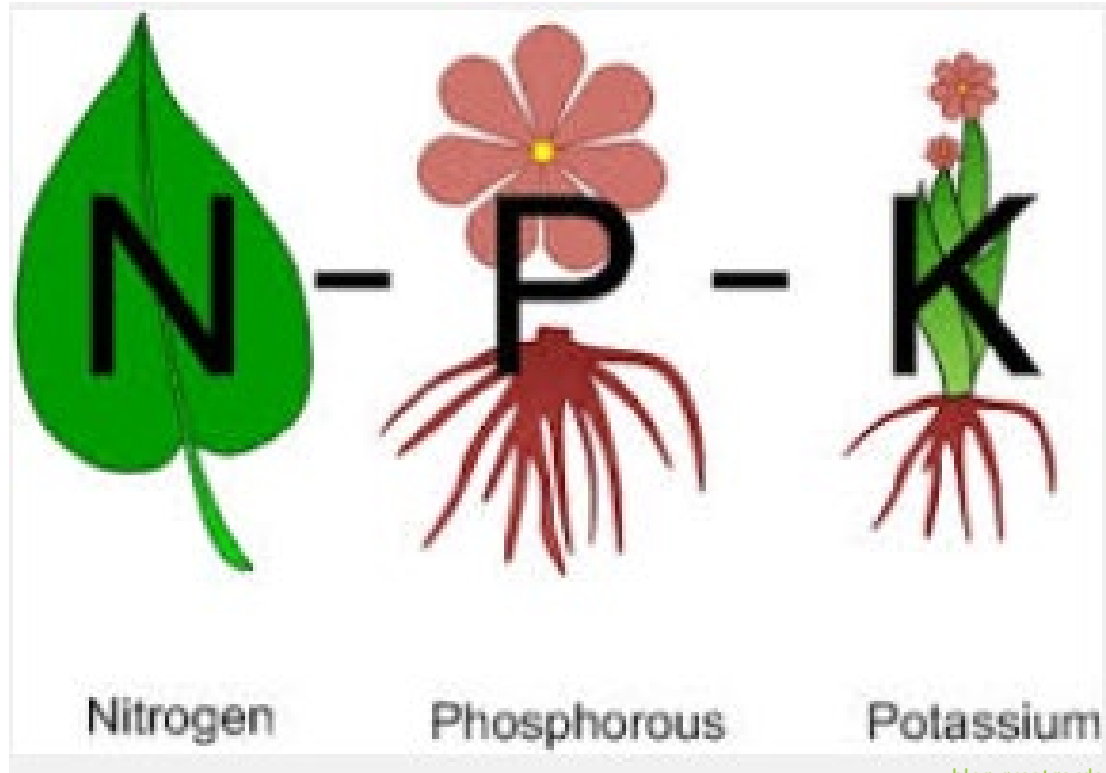
Feeding your soil

- ✓ Plants have the ability to tell you what is wrong
- ✓ If you add organic matter , you should not need additional nutrients
- ✓ Despite all best practices, you may need to boost using organic fertilizers



Feeding your soil

- ✓ If you fertilize use composted manure or a balanced organic slow-release fertilizer



Composting – what are the benefits?

- ✓ Reusing and recycling
- ✓ It's natural – occurs in nature!
- ✓ Helps grow strong healthy plants
- ✓ Good for soil health and structure
- ✓ Adds micro-organisms to root zone



<http://www.planetnatural.com>

Composting – what are the benefits?

- ✓ Reduces needs for synthetic fertilizers
- ✓ Helps improve water drainage in clay soils
- ✓ Helps improve water retention in sandy soils
- ✓ Helps clean up contaminated soil (remediation)



<http://www.planetnatural.com>

Mulching

- ✓ Add mulch (or top up) to areas of exposed bare soil 3” max thickness
- ✓ Ensure mulch doesn't touch crowns of plants and/or stems and trunks of trees
- ✓ Mulch flower beds with compost or other organic materials
- ✓ Use leaves, and organic mulch
- ✓ Mulch open soil areas to minimize the spread of weeds



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Don't have enough time/energy

No time!



CHOOSE LOW MAINTENANCE
AND NATIVE PLANTS



START SMALL

Low Maintenance Plants Defined

- ✓ Need little or no pruning
- ✓ Drought tolerant
- ✓ Can thrive in different conditions
- ✓ Disease free\resistant
- ✓ Little or no fertilizer
- ✓ Stays put in garden



Low Maintenance Plants

- ✓ Lawns - generally too much work
- ✓ Natives are better adapted to local conditions
- ✓ Use shrubs and bulbs.
- ✓ Mulch to deter weeds
- ✓ Disadvantages
 - ✓ some are prolific
 - ✓ can take over a garden and choke out other plants



Why Plant with Native Species?



Through habitat loss and the introduction of non-native plant species, we are losing biodiversity



Gardening with native plants is crucial to restoring the natural ecosystem and is almost as important as preserving existing ecosystems

What are Natives?

- ✓ Southern Ontario's native plants existed here for thousand of years prior to European settlement
- ✓ The diverse group of plants evolved together with indigenous wildlife, adapting to local climate and soil conditions to create stable natural ecosystems
- ✓ The soil and climate of a region in large part dictate the plants and animals that naturally exist in the area – these species are referred to as native

Benefits of Gardening with Natives



attracts birds



attracts bees

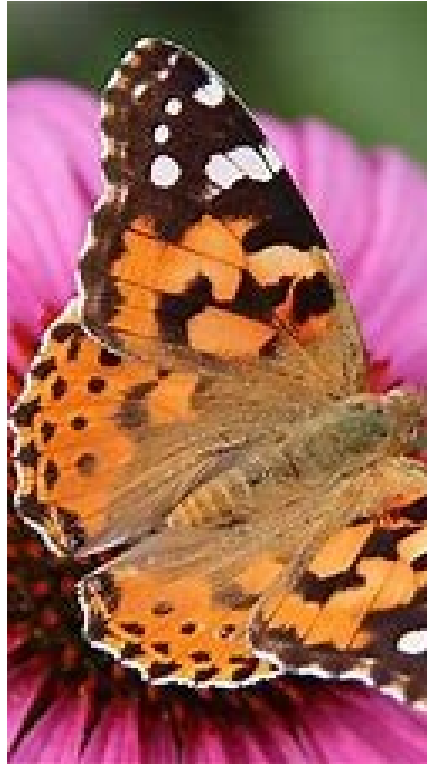


attracts butterflies



attracts flies

- ✓ Adapted to the local climate and growing conditions
- ✓ Can thrive with minimum attention and watering
- ✓ Adapted to local insects and soils
- ✓ Generally don't need fertilizers
- ✓ Provide seeds and berries for birds and nectar
- ✓ Provide pollen for beneficial insects, like bees and butterflies
- ✓ Pollinators are attracted to native plants more than other horticultural species or varieties



Food for Pollinators

Low Maintenance Perennials

- ✓ Perennial Geraniums
- ✓ Rudbeckia (Black Eyed Susans)
- ✓ Stonecrop/Sedums
- ✓ Liatris
- ✓ Echinacea (Coneflower)
- ✓ Goat's Beard



Ornamental Grasses



Shrubs and small trees

Advantages:

- ✓ Covers a large space
- ✓ Varied colours and textures
- ✓ Many flower in spring
- ✓ Little maintenance if planted in right place
- ✓ Only maintenance required is to prune out dead, diseased or damaged
- ✓ Need to allow room for shrub at full maturity



<https://www.etsy.com/ca/listing/620668511/golden-japanese-forest-grass-hakonechloa>



But watch out for wildlife

Low Maintenance Shrubs

- ✓ Red-twig Dogwood
- ✓ Euonymus
- ✓ Spirea
- ✓ Boxwood
- ✓ Lilac
- ✓ Forsythia
- ✓ Potentilla

Pagoda Dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*)



Nanny Berry (*Viburnum lentago*)



Photo: St Williams Nursery



Photographer " Graham Buck from Ontariowildflowers.com



Serviceberry (*Amelanchier spp.*)



Wild Black currant (*Ribes americanum*)



Spirea

- ✓ *Spiraea japonica* 'Goldflame'



- ✓ Shrubby Cinquefoil

Lilac



Bulbs

- ✓ Nature's perfect plant
- ✓ All nutrients are contained in the bulb
- ✓ Plant in the fall and enjoy the show in the spring
- ✓ Bloom year after year
- ✓ Many will naturalize
- ✓ Careful planting can give 6 weeks of colour





Bulbs are tough!

Bulbs are tough...and beautiful



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It's too expensive

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What's your budget?



Budget is an important part of planning



Focus on the most important areas



How much should I budget?



Consider your return on investment



Phase your installations & budget



Your budget should consider your short and long-term plan

Prioritize

- ✓ Budget is an important part of planning
- ✓ Hardscaping Based on your review determine what you are changing
- ✓ Prioritize your
 - ✓ Hardscaping
 - ✓ Trees & shrubs
 - ✓ Plant materials
 - ✓ Vegetable patches
 - ✓ Container gardens

Bust the Myth that - Plants are too expensive

- ✓ Go to local garden club plant sales
- ✓ Start plants from seeds
- ✓ Watch for sales, most garden centres have end of season bargains
- ✓ Swap with your family/friends/neighbors
- ✓ Choose lower priced plants to start.



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Need space for kids/pets

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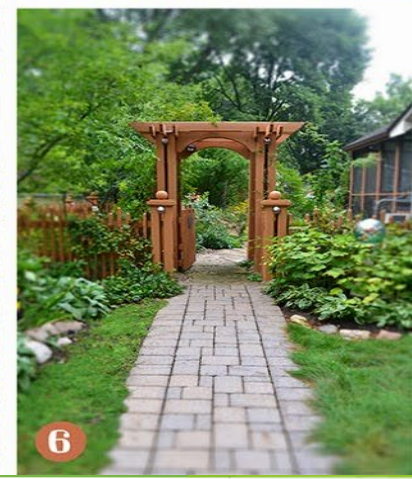
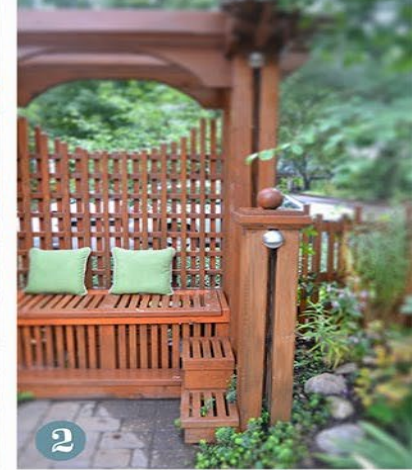
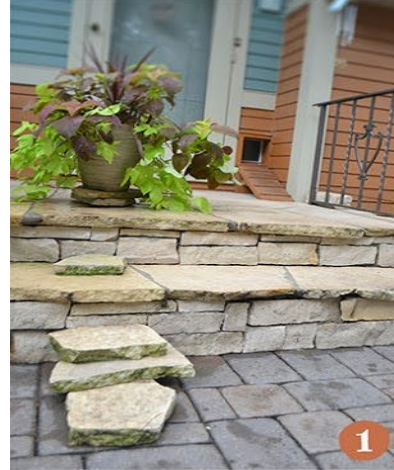
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Garden with kids



Garden with pets

- ✓ Fencing
- ✓ The right plants
- ✓ Avoid bare soil
- ✓ Digging problems
- ✓ Dogs and lawns
- ✓ Incorporate paths



Live in an apartment/condo

Balcony Gardening

Consider:

- ✓ Wind
- ✓ Light
- ✓ Winter Hardiness
- ✓ Container & soil types
- ✓ Building Restrictions
- ✓ Water Requirements
- ✓ Space available



Plant Selection

Perennials/Shrubs:

Sedums ,Yew,
Hydrangea, Boxwood,
Grasses, Mums

Flowers:

Salvia, Geraniums,
Nasturtiums, Lavender
Marigolds, Begonias



Plant Selection

Vegetables:

Carrots, Lettuce,
tomatoes, kale ,
beans

Herbs:

Sage, Basil,
Rosemary, Thyme,
Chives



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Don't know where/how to start

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No Green thumb!

How to get started?

- ✓ Attend sessions such as this one!
- ✓ Join your local garden/horticultural society
- ✓ Reference books, magazines and websites!
- ✓ Start small and enjoy your successes
- ✓ What do your neighbours grow?
- ✓ Plants die!





Paul Jung Gardening Services



Wrap Up!

Upcoming Workshop: Leap Into Pruning!

February 29, 2020
at
10:00 am - 12:00 noon



Etobicoke Master Gardeners & Humber Arboretum

Thank you!

Questions?



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