



LOW MAINTENANCE GARDENING FOR LOADS OF BEAUTY & HEALTH



IN A NUTSHELL - DESIGN AND REDESIGN WITH MAINTENANCE AND ENJOYMENT IN MIND

- LESS IS MORE
- MAKE IT EASY
- DO THE GROUNDWORK
- CHOOSE WISELY
- TREAT THEM RIGHT
- GARDEN WITH EASE
- WARM UP, TAKE BREAKS AND BE SAFE

LESS IS MORE

- Start small and expand as time, energy and desire allow
 - Fewer and smaller beds
 - Easy access to all parts of the garden bed and surrounding landscape
- Fewer species - more of each
 - Low Maintenance Design Tips
 - Design with Maintenance in Mind
- Simple combinations to double impact and create interest
 - Plants flower at same time to double interest
 - Plants flower at different times to extend bloom time
 - Make it edible and attractive - foodscaping
- Proper spacing
 - Shrub Plantings with Big Impact in a Short Time
 - Use annuals and perennials as fillers as trees and shrubs grow
 - You'll need fewer annuals each year
 - Eventually move perennials to new garden
 - ▶ If jumping worms are not an issue

MAKE IT EASY

- Design for easy maintenance
 - Gentle curves
 - Easy to maintain area around the beds
- Edge the bed
 - Edging Garden Beds
 - Use mulch-filled trench or purchase and install edging material
 - Slows the invasion of grass and weeds into the garden

Utility-friendly Tree Planting Tips from We Energies

Trees growing too close to power lines can cause sparks, fires, power outages and shock hazards. To avoid these problems, plant trees that won't interfere with power lines when fully grown. Small ornamental trees or shrubs that will not exceed 15 feet in height such as serviceberry, dogwood and low-growing evergreens are best to plant around power lines. Trees such as maple, basswood, burr oak, white pine or spruce grow more than 40 feet high and should be planted more than 50 feet from any overhead power lines.

And don't forget to call 811 at least three days before planting to check the location of underground services.

Learn more utility-friendly planting tips at we-energy.com.



- Contain mulch
- Easier mowing if designed properly
- Mulch
 - **Best All Around Mulch**
 - Spread a thin layer of wood chips, bark, leaves or evergreen needles
 - Organic mulches:
 - ▶ Provide weed control
 - ▶ Moderate soil temperatures
 - ▶ Help reduce risk of erosion and compaction from heavy rains
 - ▶ Improve soil as they decompose
 - DO NOT use weed barrier beneath organic mulches
 - ▶ **Using Weed Barrier in the Landscape**
 - Stone mulches
 - ▶ **Using Stone Mulch Around Trees and In the Garden**
 - ▶ Used for aesthetic reasons - do not improve the soil
 - ▶ Can increase soil temperature extremes
 - ▶ Can serve as ammunition
 - ▶ Do use weed barrier beneath to prevent stone from working its way into the soil below
- Keep tools handy
 - Bucket of tools by the door
 - Convert mailbox into hand tool storage
 - ▶ **Convert Mailbox into an In-Garden Tool Storage**
 - Small, attractive shed for larger tools
 - Make it easy to transport tools
 - ▶ Repurpose an old golf bag with wheels, a cart with wheels...
 - Clean and sharpen your tools
 - ▶ **Sharpen and Clean Your Shovel**
 - Helpful tools and accessories
 - ▶ Longer handles extend your reach and help you retain good posture
 - ▶ Handles with a larger grip and more cushion
 - ▶ Ergonomic designs
 - ◆ Keep your hand straighter to avoid fatigue and injury
 - ◆ Allow you to work longer
 - ▶ Ratchet pruners allow you to achieve the same result using less power

Landscaping Around We Energies Utilities

Plants and other landscaping features can interfere with utility equipment and cause safety risks. Remember to:

Maintain equipment visibility: Use techniques that camouflage rather than hide utility equipment. Hearty grasses and/or flowers are preferred. They provide aesthetic improvements and grow back quickly should equipment access be necessary.

Ensure easy access: When fencing is used, choose a split-rail type, which can be easily dismantled when equipment access is needed. Be sure fences are located more than 3 feet from transformer sides and no permanent fence post is located in front of transformer door.

Keep proper clearance: When woody shrubs or bushes are used, place them more than 3 feet from transformer sides and more than 10 feet from its door. Keep future growth in mind for the size of shrubs or bushes.

Learn more utility-friendly planting tips at we-energies.com.

- ▶ Keep your tools sharp
 - ◆ Exert less effort
 - * Results in less muscle fatigue
 - ◆ **Right Size Hand-Held Pruner for You**
- ▶ Knee protection
 - ◆ Garden kneeler (party bench)
 - ◆ Knee pads

DO THE GROUNDWORK - BUILD A SOLID FOUNDATION

- Starting a new bed or repairing one with issues
 - Most of us are dealing with disturbed sites (poor soil), so may need to do improvement
 - Healthy soil promotes healthy plant growth
 - ▶ More detailed information on soils is available in my **Getting Started Growing Vegetable & Flower Gardens** webinar
 - ◆ Password: v+r3+V89
- ▶ **Soil Preparation**
 - Non chemical options
 - ▶ Till two times per month for two seasons
 - ▶ Solarize with clear plastic for 6 to 8 weeks during the hottest part of the season
 - ◆ **Cook (Solarize) Away Weeds and Soil Pests and Diseases**
 - ▶ Cardboard/newspaper and mulch
 - ◆ **Convert Lawn to Gardens**
 - ▶ Amending soil with organic matter
 - ▶ Creating soil and raised beds
 - ◆ **Lasagna**
 - ◆ **Hugelkultur gardens**
 - ◆ **Greiten method**
 - Topdressing existing gardens
 - ▶ Spread compost over soil surface
 - ◆ **Reviving a Flower Garden**
 - ▶ Vertical mulching
 - ◆ **Perennial Garden Renovations**
 - ◆ Use auger bit to aerate soil
 - ◆ Incorporate compost throughout the garden bed



About Melinda

Nationally known gardening expert, TV/radio host, author & columnist Melinda Myers has over 30 years of horticulture experience and has written over 20 gardening books, including *Can't Miss Small Space Gardening*, *the Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, and *Jackson and Perkins' Beautiful Roses Made Easy*. She hosts the nationally-syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" program airing on over 115 TV and radio stations throughout the U.S. Melinda also hosts the internationally distributed Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series, including the latest *Food Gardening for Everyone* DVD set. She is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine, writes the twice monthly "Gardeners' Questions" newspaper column and a nationally-distributed gardening column. She appears regularly as a guest expert on national and local television and radio shows.

Visit Melinda's website,
melindamyers.com

CHOOSE WISELY – RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT PURPOSE

- Right Plant for the Location
 - Suited to the growing conditions
 - ▶ Heat ◀ Light
 - ▶ Cold ◀ Wind
 - ▶ Soil ◀ Salt
 - ◆ Grow healthier plants with less effort and fewer problems
- Hardy
 - ▶ **Plant Hardiness Zones**
- Pest resistant plants
 - ▶ No need to plant problems that create more work
- Right size
 - ▶ Less pruning needed, generating less yard waste
- Low maintenance plants
 - ▶ No or minimal deadheading needed
 - ▶ Not aggressive (doesn't reseed / non-spreading)
 - ◆ Minimal weeding and dividing needed to keep in bounds
 - ◆ Aggressive plants are bullies in the garden - crowding out neighboring plants, but do not escape into native habitats
- Non-invasive plants
 - ◆ Invasive plants leave the garden, moving into native habitats (woods, wetlands, prairies...), crowding out native plants that birds, wildlife and pollinators depend on for food and shelter
- Native plants when possible
 - ▶ Select those suited to space and growing conditions
- Fragrance for a bit of aromatherapy
 - ▶ Include near, or in, outdoor areas where you can enjoy
 - ▶ Entryways to welcome you home and greet visitors
 - ▶ A few plants to consider:
 - ◆ **Carol Mackie Daphne**
 - ◆ **Koreanspice Viburnum**
 - * Sugar n' Spice
 - * Spice Island
 - ◆ **Fothergilla**
 - ◆ **Lilac**
 - ◆ **Mockorange**
 - ◆ **Sweet Emotion Abelia**
 - ◆ **Clethra**
 - ◆ **Heptacodium**
 - ◆ **Witchhazel**
 - ◆ **Alyssum**
 - ◆ **Peony**
 - ◆ **Heliotrope**
 - ◆ **Phlox**
 - ◆ **Lavender**
 - ◆ **Nicotiana**
 - ◆ **Petunia**
 - ◆ **Milkweed**
 - ◆ **American Wisteria**
 - ◆ Sweet Summer Love Clematis

UPCOMING WEBINARS

February 25th

Planning Your Rain Garden

February 27th

Creating a Private Space: Design Strategies for Screening, Privacy and More

March 3rd

10 Ways to Spice Up Your Garden with Summer-Blooming Bulbs

- **Nutritious Vegetables**

- In a container or elevated garden when space is limited and for convenience
- Mix vegetables in ornamental plantings
- Dedicated food garden if space allows
- Match vegetables to preferred growing conditions
 - ♦ Full sun (preferably 8 hours or more)
 - * Edible parts are the flowers (broccoli) or fruit (tomatoes, peppers, melons...)
 - ♦ Part sun tolerant (4-6 hours)
 - * Root crops (radishes, beets...)
 - ♦ Shade tolerant (4 hours sun)
 - * Leafy crops (lettuce, spinach...)
- ♦ Soil
 - * Moist, well-drained soils
- ♦ Fertilize
 - * Low N, slow-release in spring before planting
 - * Midsummer if needed

Sign up for my FREE Newsletter!

Get the chance to win a seasonal prize!

- Harvest
 - ♦ Greatest productivity
 - ♦ Aesthetics
- A few nutritious vegetables to consider:

- ♦ Spinach
- ♦ Kale
- ♦ Broccoli
- ♦ Peas
- ♦ Sweet Potatoes

- ♦ Beets (roots and greens)
- ♦ Carrots
- ♦ Fermented Vegetables
- ♦ Tomatoes
- ♦ Garlic

- ♦ Onions
- ♦ Alfalfa Sprouts (microgreens)
- ♦ Bell Peppers
- ♦ Cauliflower
- ♦ Seaweed

- **Nutritious Fruits**

- **Compact varieties available for small spaces and containers**

- Most need full sun and moist, well-drained soils
- Avoid over fertilization that can impact flowering and fruiting

- **Growing Fruit in Small Spaces**

- A few of the more nutritious fruits to consider:

- ♦ Blueberries
 - * **Bushel and Berry compact varieties**
- ♦ Pomegranate Seeds
- ♦ Raspberries
 - * Raspberry Shortcake for smaller spaces

- ♦ Oranges

- ♦ **Apples**

- * Most need 2 varieties for pollination
- * Urban and North Pole for small spaces and containers

Miss a Webinar?
Melinda's Webinars are Available
On Demand!



WATCH NOW



- Attract Birds and Pollinators

- Plant food and shelter

- ♦ Add a little water and/or puddle and wait
- ♦ Nectar plants for butterflies and hummingbirds
- ♦ Food for caterpillars
- ♦ Berries and seeds for birds
- ♦ Plants to attract beneficial insects

- Safe pest control

- ♦ Work with nature
 - * Handpick
 - * Sanitation
 - * Barriers and traps
 - * Eco-friendly products

TREAT THEM RIGHT - PROPER PLANTING AND CARE

- Proper planting
 - Herbaceous plants at same depth as growing in container

- ▶ **Annuals**

- ▶ **Perennials**

- ▶ **Safe planting under trees**

- **Shrubs**

- ▶ Plant crown (where roots meet stem) level with soil surface
 - ▶ Loosen, slice or remove girdling roots
 - ▶ Planting hole 2 to 5 times wider than rootball
 - ▶ Do not amend planting hole
 - ▶ See additional tips below

- **Trees**

- ▶ Plant so root flare (where roots flare away from trunk) at or slightly above soil surface
 - ▶ Once tree is set in place
 - ◆ Remove or cut away burlap and twine
 - ◆ Remove or cut away wire cage
 - ◆ Remove tags
 - ▶ Planting hole shallow and 2 to 5 times wider than rootball
 - ▶ Roughen surface to avoid glazing of hole
 - ▶ Backfill with existing soil
 - ▶ Minimal pruning (broken, rubbing branches only)
 - ▶ Mulch as wide as you can tolerate
 - ◆ Pull it away from trunk and stems

- **Proper watering**

- Young plants
 - ▶ Keep roots and surrounding soil slightly moist
 - ▶ Water thoroughly to encourage deep roots
 - Established plants
 - ▶ Continue to water thoroughly, but less often
 - ▶ Most plants need an inch of water a week
 - ◆ Drought tolerant plants need less frequent watering
 - ◆ Check soil moisture before watering
 - ◆ Apply once a week in clay soil

- ♦ Apply 1/2" every 4 days or when soil dry in sandy soil

► Trees

- Proper fertilization
 - Build your soil
 - **Soil** test to find out what type and how much, if any, fertilizer is needed
 - No soil test results
 - ♦ Consider low nitrogen, slow-release fertilizer like Milorganite
 - ♦ Most urban soils have high to excess levels of phosphorus and potassium
 - * Often tied up in the soil and not available to the plants
 - * Adding more does not help the plants and adds to other issues

► Timing of applications

- ♦ Annuals
 - * At planting
 - * Mid season, if needed

♦ Perennials

- * Topdress with compost every other year by spreading 1-2" of compost over the soil surface
- * Fertilize only if needed

♦ Trees and shrubs

- * Receive much of their nutrients from surrounding area

* Fertilizing Trees

* Pruning and Fertilizing Newly Planted Trees and Shrubs

- * Wait a year after planting to fertilize
- * Every 3 to 5 years, only if needed

• Proper pruning

◦ Prune Shrubs with a Purpose

- Prune with a reason and only when needed
- Selecting the right size plant reduces pruning

GARDEN WITH EASE

• Five Minute Garden Maintenance

- Break tasks into smaller bits
- Have tools handy and use any spare time to pull a few weeds, remove dead stems...

• Look for maintenance strategies that provide TWICE the benefits with HALF the effort

- Mulch (see all the benefits above)

► Low Maintenance Gardening - Mulch

- Recycle leaves
 - **Recycle Fall Leaves in Your Landscape**
 - Mow over and leave on the lawn, adding nutrients and organic matter to the soil
 - Use as mulch in the garden
 - Compost into valuable soil amendment
 - Save time raking and hauling to recycling center
 - Save money creating helpful garden amendments
- Burn calories and improve your landscape
 - Mowing (374)
 - Pruning (306)
 - Digging (304)
 - Gardening (272)
 - Watering (102)
- Enlist help
 - Tools and equipment to extend your endurance
 - **Strategies to Keep You Gardening**
 - Invite friends to help - share plants and knowledge
 - Round robin of garden care
 - Hire a helper
- Elevate the garden
 - **Elevated Gardens**
 - **Raised Bed Gardening**
 - **Green Wall for Vertical Appeal**
 - **Straw Bale Garden**
 - **Tips for Container Garden Success**
 - Provide easy access
 - Increase gardening convenience
 - Bring the garden to your back door
 - Overcome poor soil conditions
 - Lasagna
 - Hugelkultur
 - Straw bale gardens

- A few tips for successful **container gardening**
 - Right container
 - ◆ Drainage holes to ensure proper drainage
 - ◆ Self-watering pots with weep holes
 - * Reduce watering frequency
 - Quality potting mix
 - Check moisture daily and water thoroughly as needed
 - ◆ Usually when top few inches of soil begin to dry
 - Incorporate slow-release fertilizer at start of the season and mid season as needed
 - Right plant for the container and growing conditions

WARM UP, TAKE BREAKS AND BE SAFE

- **Garden Your Way to Better Health**
- **Garden Your Way to Fitness**
 - If you are stiff in the morning, garden later
 - If it's cold, wait until it warms up
 - Warm up exercises, just like before a sport
 - **Stretch Out Before Digging In**
 - Gentle back bends
 - Use tools as part of stretching
 - **Garden Workout**
 - Garden for shorter periods
 - Take breaks every 20 minutes
 - Add some benches to entice you into sitting
 - Lighten your load
 - Ask for help
 - Use a wheel barrel, wagon or old saucer-style snow sled
 - Break the load into smaller increments
 - When shoveling, stand upright
 - Take small scoops
 - Pivot your body, rather than twisting
 - Switch sides
 - Drink plenty of water
 - Carry water and make it part of your break

- Safety glasses
 - ▶ Especially when pruning
- Sun protection
 - ▶ Sunscreen
 - ▶ Large brimmed hat
 - ▶ Sunglasses
 - ▶ Garden in the morning or in shade
 - ◆ Reduce sun exposure
 - ◆ Increase endurance
- Wear gloves
 - ◆ Provide support
 - ◆ Protection from injury
 - ◆ Keep hands warm

Always call 811 (anywhere in the U.S.) or file online at diggershotline.com (in WI) 3 business days before digging.

Diggers Hotline or your underground utility locating service will contact all the appropriate companies. These companies mark the location of their underground utilities in the designated work area. This reduces the risk and inconvenience of accidentally knocking out power, cable or other utilities as you enhance your landscape.





Thank You to We Energies for Sponsoring this Webinar

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