

**Let's Grow**  
BORD BIA  
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# Easy Steps to Dream Gardens

Garden Designs from Bloom Award-Winning Designers



## The Nature Enthusiast's Garden

DESIGNER: JANE MCCORKELL



# Easy Steps to Dream Gardens

## What is 'Easy Steps to Dream Gardens'?

Brought to you by Bord Bia Bloom, Easy Steps to Dream Gardens is a new initiative designed to help you plant your own show garden at home.

We have worked with seven of Bloom's award-winning show garden designers to create individual garden designs suited to every lifestyle and location.

## What are the benefits of using garden designs like these?

The gardens have been designed by some of Ireland's top garden designers and landscape architects who are experts in assessing outdoor spaces and creating beautiful designs that meet the needs of garden owners.

These designs have been carefully considered to provide year-round interest and are tailored to suit various conditions. There is a solution for almost any garden, whether it sits in full-shade, dappled shade or enjoys all-day sun.

## How have the gardens been designed?

The seven designs are based on a garden size of 15 metres x 9 metres. However, elements from all the designs can be adapted to suit your own outdoor space, whatever the size or location.

Each of the seven design packs in the series feature an easy-to-follow planting plan and detailed planting information. Colour-, scent- and nature-friendly, the planting plans can be implemented in your garden

# The Nature Enthusiast's Garden

DESIGNER: JANE MCCORKELL



**Nature enthusiasts of all ages will love this south-west facing garden that is a haven for wildlife.**

'People often think that a natural garden has to look uncared for but that is not the case. You can add form and function and still achieve a natural style,' reveals landscape architect, Jane McCorkell.

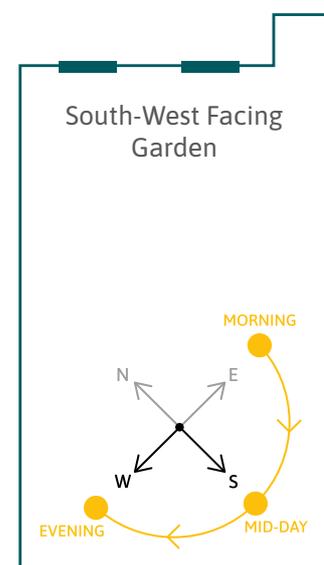
This garden has been designed for a family of nature enthusiasts and will suit every age group, she says. 'Young kids will love the hedgehog house and strawberry pallet wall while older children and teenagers will appreciate the easy-access bike storage and the outside room which can be transformed into a den or home office as the need arises.'

The garden is planted in Jane's signature natural, organic style, with a wildflower grass area and pollinator-friendly flowers. 'The shrubs and flowers have been selected to encourage birds, bees and other insects. Bird feeders, butterfly houses, and bug hotels can easily be added to attract more wildlife.' A living wall and green-roofed storage\* further boosts this garden's eco-credentials.

Planning and experimenting is key to a successful garden design, says Jane. 'You need to be prepared to interact with the garden. Be observant. Watch what happens throughout the day and the seasons. It's not always a good idea to rush right in, you need to plot how the sun travels through the garden and plan how you will use it at different times of the day, particularly if you are considering investing in hard landscaping.'

**\*Note:** Ensure your shed structure/roof is strong enough to take additional weight before adding a green roof. Please seek professional advice before embarking on this project.

**Jane McCorkell** is a garden designer, landscape architect and landscape horticultural consultant. She has received many accolades for her work, including seven Gold Medals at Bord Bia Bloom.



Jane's advice for creating a natural garden.

**Wildflower mixes:** The wildflower grass area can include all sorts of bulbs or you could try growing some poppies or other annual flowers in compostable pots and planting them into the grass once they are established.

**Hedgehog house:** A shaded fern garden is a perfect spot for a hedgehog house. These can be made with an old box and are best situated in areas with leaf mulch and extra privacy.

**Hedges:** Plant deciduous hedges along a post and wire fence to provide extra support in the first couple of years. It stops young plants/whips rocking in the wind.



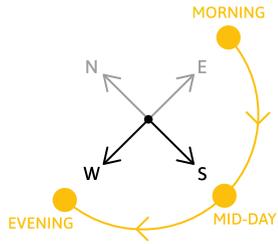
**Living wall:** experiment with foliage plants, such as Heuchera varieties, to create a living picture.

**Additional bulbs:** Try inter-planting lilies and other summer bulbs between your perennials and small shrubs. Bulbs are a great way to add colour and interest in springtime, especially in small gardens where space is limited.

**Fruit espalier trees:** Training your apple trees as espaliers – where branches are trained to grow flat against a wall or lattice – will give the best show and fruiting display in small gardens. Try a line of annual wildflowers at the base of your espaliers for added interest.

# Garden Plan

THE NATURE ENTHUSIAST'S GARDEN



## South-West Facing Garden

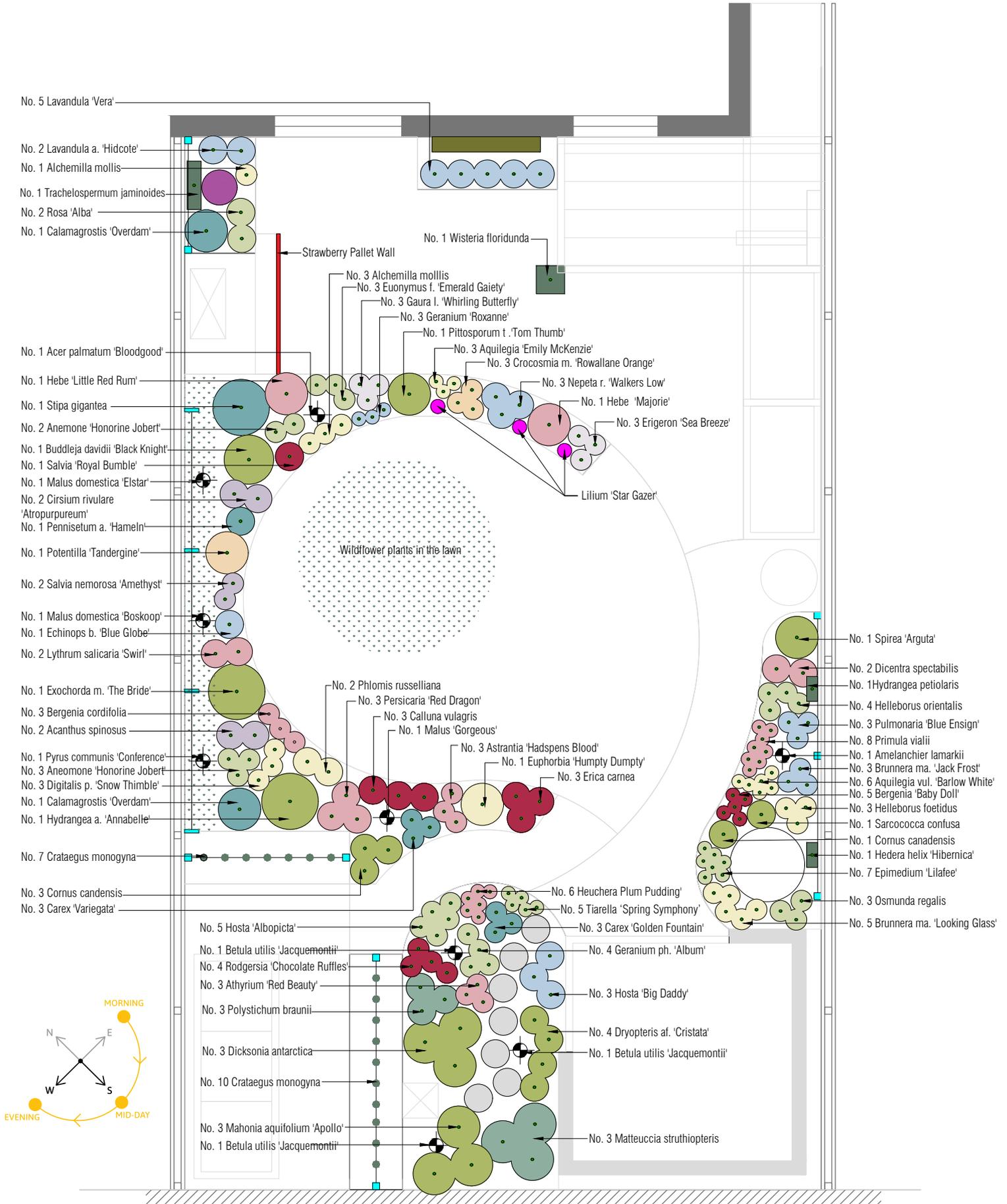
Garden size | 15m X 9m

- 1 Patio doors from house
- 2 Herb Tower
- 3 Mixed planting
- 4 Green living wall
- 5 Air to water heat pump or other service
- 6 Strawberry and kitchen garden wall
- 7 Main paved entertainment area
- 8 Timber pergola structure painted black with galvanized wire cross beams for climbers
- 9 Square cut out for climber planting
- 10 Vertical bike storage rack
- 11 Out door garden wardrobe for storage topped with Sedum green roof
- 12 Water butt
- 13 Wired wall with shade tolerant climbers
- 14 Feature multistem tree
- 15 Spring flowering bed
- 16 Bug hotel
- 17 Gravel path with stabilising ritter
- 18 Lawn area
- 19 Wild flower mix within lawn
- 20 Small ornamental tree
- 21 Pollinator friendly ornamental and shrub planting
- 22 Fruit Espaliers supported with timber post and wire (Posts to be painted black)
- 23 Specimen trees
- 24 Hedge screen
- 25 Grass reinforcement
- 26 Composting bins and bin storage
- 27 Fern and shaded tolerant planting
- 28 Stepping stones to wildlife corner
- 29 Hedgehog House
- 30 Garden office
- 31 Back garden wall Concrete block and render
- 32 Two side boundary wall timber panel fencing



# Planting Plan

## THE NATURE ENTHUSIAST'S GARDEN



Garden size | 15m X 9m



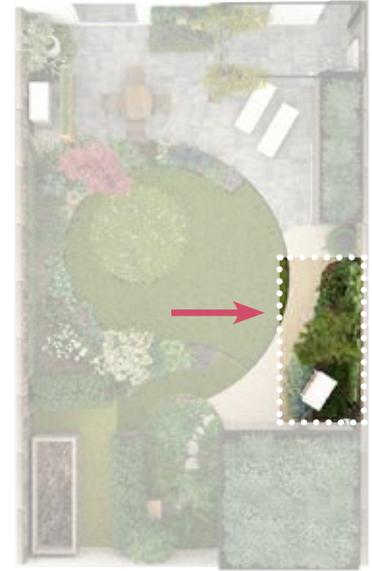
Plant	Pot Size	Qty
<b>Trees</b>		
Acer palmatum 'Bloodgood'	15/20L	1
Amelanchier lamarckii Multistem	10/15L	1
Malus 'Gorgeous'	10/15L	1
Betula utilis var. jacquemontii	15/20L	3
<b>Fruit esapalier tree varieties</b>		
Malus domestica 'Elstar' low screen	10L	1
Malus domestica 'Boskoop'	10L	1
Pyrus communis 'Conference'	10L	1
<b>Hedge</b>		
Crataegus monogyna (bareroot whips or 1.5L pot)		60
<b>Climbers</b>		
Trachelospermum jasminoides aka Jasminoides officinale		1
Wisteria floribunda		1
<b>Climbers for Spring bed</b>		
Hydrangea anomala subsp. Petiolaris	5L	2
Hedera helix 'Hibernica'	3L	2
<b>Beds at house</b>		
Lavandula 'Vera'	2/3L	5
Lavandula angustifolia 'Hidcote'	2/3L	2
Alchemilla mollis	2L	1
Rosa 'Alba' [White Flower Carpet	3L	2
Calamagrostis 'Overdam'	3L	1
<b>Spring bed</b>		
Spirea arguta	2/3L	1
Dicentra spectabilis	2/3L	2
Helleborus orientalis	2/3L	4
Pulmonaria 'Blue Ensign'	2/3L	3
Primula vialii	2/3L	8
Brunnera macrophylla 'Jack Frost'	2/3L	3
Aquilegia vulgaris var. stellata 'White Barlow'	2/3L	6
Bergenia 'Baby Doll'	2/3L	5
Helleborus foetidus	2/3L	3
Sarcococca confusa	2/3L	1
Cornus canadensis	2/3L	1
Epimedium 'Lilafee'	2/3L	7
Osmunda regalis	2/3L	3
Brunnera macrophylla 'Looking Glass'	2/3L	5
<b>Pollinator Perennial and Shrub mix</b>		
Euonymus fortunei 'Emerald Gaiety'	5L	3
Gaura lindheimeri 'Whirling Butterflies'	3L	3
Pittosporum tenuifolium 'Tom Thumb'	5L	1
Aquilegia 'Emily McKenzie'	2/3L	3
Crocsmia masoniorum 'Rowallane Orange'	2/3L	3
Nepeta racemosa 'Walkers Low'	2/3L	3

Plant	Pot Size	Qty
Hebe 'Marjorie'	3L	1
Erigeron glaucus 'Sea Breeze'	1/2L	3
Lilium 'Star Gazer'	2/3L	3
Geranium 'Rozanne'	2/3L	3
Alchemilla mollis	2/3L	3
Salvia 'Royal Bumble'	2/3L	1
Phlomis russelliana	2/3L	2
Persicaria 'Red Dragon'	2/3L	3
Calluna vulgaris	2/3L	3
Astrantia 'Hadspen Blood'	2/3L	3
Euphorbia 'Humpty Dumpty'	2/3L	1
Erica carnea	2/3L	3
Hebe 'Little Red Rum'	2/3L	1
Stipa gigantea	2/3L	1
Anemone 'Honorine Jobert'	2/3L	5
Buddleja davidii 'Black Knight'	2/3L	1
Cirsium rivulare 'Atropurpureum'	2/3L	2
Pennisetum alopecuroides 'Hameln'	2/3L	1
Potentilla 'Tangerine'	2/3L	1
Salvia nemorosa 'Amethyst'	2/3L	2
Echinops bannaticus 'Blue Globe'	2/3L	1
Lythrum salicaria 'Swirl'	2/3L	2
Exochorda macrantha 'The Bride'	2/3L	1
Bergenia cordifolia	2/3L	3
Acanthus spinosus	2/3L	2
Digitalis purpurea 'Snow Thimble'	2/3L	3
Calamagrostis 'Overdam'	2/3L	1
Hydrangea aborescens 'Annabelle'	2/3L	1
Cornus canadensis	2/3L	3
Carex 'Variegata'	2/3L	3
<b>Fern and shade tolerant planting</b>		
Geranium phaeum 'Album'	2/3L	4
Heuchera 'Plum Pudding'	2/3L	6
Carex 'Gold Fountain'	2/3L	3
Tiarella 'Spring Symphony'	2/3L	5
Hosta 'Big Daddy'	2/3L	3
Dryopteris affinis 'Cristata'	2/3L	4
Matteuccia struthiopteris	2/3L	3
Hosta 'Albopicta'	2/3L	5
Rodgersia 'Chocolate Ruffles'	2/3L	4
Athyrium 'Red Beauty'	2/3L	3
Polystichum braunii	2/3L	3
Dicksonia antarctica	5L	3
Mahonia aquifolium 'Apollo'	5L	3
<b>Spring Bulbs</b>		
Muscari		
Narcissus 'Tête-à-tête' (miniature daffodils)		

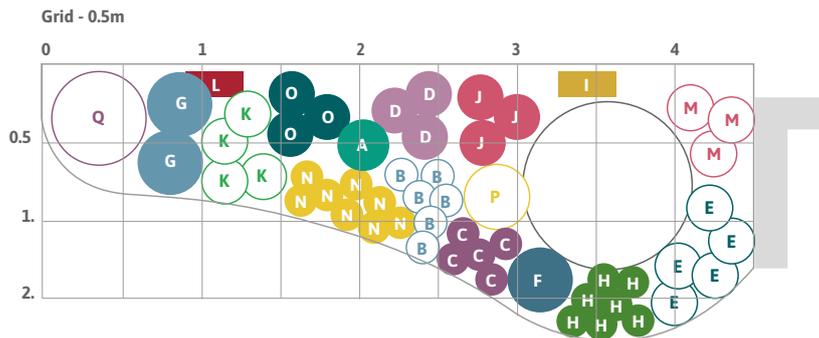
3D view of feature planting



Border Area



Planting Plan



**This border can be recreated in most gardens and works well in sunny or semi-shaded spots.**

Plants have greater visual impact when grouped in multiples and the further from the house or main viewing area, the greater the multiple should be,' advises Jane McCorkell.

Bulbs to plant in this area include Muscari, commonly known as blue grape hyacinths for their bell shape and grape juice fragrance; Narcissus 'Tête-à-tête' (miniature daffodils); and Fritillaria varieties from the lily family.

Amelanchier lamarkii multi-stem – also called June berry – sits centre stage, with foliage changing hue throughout the seasons from a copper colour in spring, to green in summer and scarlet in autumn. Its white flowers bloom in spring and are followed by purple black berries in summer, which are a great food source for birds and safe for humans too.

You can make your own multi-stem tree (a tree with two or more stems) by planting three single-stem small trees in the one hole. 'Angle and train them outwards over the years to create a focal point,' says Jane. Installing an uplighter at the base of the tree will have a striking effect in winter.

You will find the full list of plants in the **planting plan**.

### Border Plant List

A	Amelanchier lamarkii [Multistem]
B	Aquilegia vulgaris var. stellata 'White Barlow'
C	Bergenia 'Baby Doll'
D	Brunnera macrophylla 'Jack Frost'
E	Brunnera macrophylla 'Looking Glass'
F	Cornus canadensis
G	Dicentra spectabilis
H	Epimedium 'Lilafee'
I	Hedera helix 'Hibernica'
J	Helleborus foetidus
K	Helleborus orientalis
L	Hydrangea anomala subsp. Petiolaris
M	Osmunda regalis
N	Primula vialii
O	Pulmonaria 'Blue Ensign'
P	Sarcococca confusa
Q	Spirea 'Arguta'

# Easy Steps to Dream Gardens

To view the other 6 Dream Garden Designs visit  
[bordbiabloom.com/dreamgardens](https://bordbiabloom.com/dreamgardens)



**The Coastal Garden**  
by James Purdy



**The Entertainers' Garden**  
by Linda McKeown



**The Easy Care Garden**  
by Oliver & Liat Schurmann



**The Shared Spaces Family Garden**  
by Nicola Haines



**The Family Friendly Garden**  
by Maeve O'Neill



**The Plant Lovers Garden**  
by Patricia Tyrrell

# Common Questions

## What is a planting plan?

A planting plan is a comprehensive guide which shows you what plants to plant in your garden and where to plant them in order to achieve a successful planting scheme. All seven planting plans featured in this series are easy-to-follow and can be adapted to suit your garden size and aspect.

## Can I still use the plans if I don't have a 15m x 9m garden?

Yes, for each design we have focused on a specific border which can be implemented in your own garden, regardless of size. The plans include a grid in each downloadable pack which can be repeated to suit the size of your border. Staff in your local garden centre will be able to offer further advice if required.

## I only have a balcony or a window box. Can I still take part?

Yes, many of the plants featured in this series are suitable for container gardening (e.g. window boxes, hanging baskets and planters). Here are some useful tips to help you get started.

## Where can I buy the plants?

The designers have chosen plants that are grown in Ireland and are readily available in garden retailers around the country. All the plants are available to purchase throughout the year, while bulbs can be purchased in the autumn.

## How much do the designs cost to implement in my own garden?

The cost depends on a variety of factors, including the condition of and access to your garden and whether you want to invest in hard landscaping features. The focus borders in this series are a great way to liven up your garden on a budget. Many of the perennial and annual plants featured are very affordable and can help you add colour and interest without a significant outlay.

## Is the aspect of my garden important when choosing a garden design?

Aspect is the direction a garden faces – north, south east or west - and determines how much sun or shade a space receives. Each of the garden designs has been designed for a specific aspect, so before choosing a design, find out the aspect of your own garden here – [link here](#)

The direction your garden faces will determine how much sun it will get throughout the day. For example, an east-facing garden will get good morning sun.. A south-facing garden will get sun for most of the day in summer, while gardens that face west will get sun from late morning/

early afternoon through to the evening. North-facing gardens tend to be shady and a little cooler. However, they may have sun to the rear of the garden which may be the best location for a seating area.

## What other factors I should consider when choosing which garden design to plant in my own garden?

Good garden design starts with research and planning. Once you have found out your garden's aspect, the first step is to survey your existing garden. Your local garden centre is the best place to get expert advice on the following considerations:

- **Your location** – is your garden in an exposed coastal or upland location or a less exposed, sheltered location?
- **Your soil** – understanding the soil in your garden will inform what plants will work best for your plot. Soil textures vary from heavy clay to sand, while the ph. of your soil can vary from acid to alkaline. Once you understand the soil in your garden you can determine what you might need to do to improve it. The condition can be enhanced by adding soil conditioners such as farmyard manure or compost.
- **Changing levels** – is your garden flat or does it slope towards/away from the house? Is water runoff an issue? Do you need steps or terracing? This will help you plan any hard landscaping features. You should seek professional advice if you have drainage issues or notable level changes.
- **Adjoining properties** – what impact, if any, do adjoining properties have on your garden? Do neighbouring buildings or trees cast shade on your space? Do you need to add planting or structures to provide privacy in your garden?
- **Usage** – do you have small children or pets that are likely to try eating your plants? Look for plants with low/no toxicity. Your local garden centre will be able to offer further advice on this.
- **Measurements** – finally, measure your garden and plot it out on paper. Using graph paper will make it easier to plot your dimensions. Alternatively, you can print out the grid sheet we have provided at the back of this downloadable garden packs.

Once you have surveyed your garden and assessed your needs you can select the Dream Garden Plan that works best for you.

# Common Questions

## When should I start planting?

Pot/container-grown trees and shrubs can be planted year-round when the ground and weather conditions are favourable. It's important to remember to water trees regularly during the drier months until the tree is established, which is typically after two years.

Bareroot hedges are planted during the dormant season, which runs from November until early March. Plant these when the ground and weather conditions are favourable. As with trees, remember to water a new hedge during spells of dry weather.

Spring and summer bulbs such as Daffodils (Narcissus), Crocus, Tulips and Alliums are planted the previous autumn.

## What is hard landscaping?

Hard landscaping is a term to describe the hard elements in your garden such as stone, concrete, and gravel. It generally refers to paths, patios and other built structures such as pergolas and water features.

If you are skilled at DIY you may be able to undertake some elements of the design yourself and there are plenty of resources available in online blogs and YouTube to

help you do this. However, if you are considering adding complex hard landscaping features to your garden then you may be better served hiring a professional. Hard landscaping is a long-term investment and should last throughout the lifespan of your garden so it is important to get it right from the outset.

## What basic skills do I need?

Check out [www.bordbia.ie](http://www.bordbia.ie) to get advice and tips that can help you hone your gardening skills.

## What equipment and products do I need?

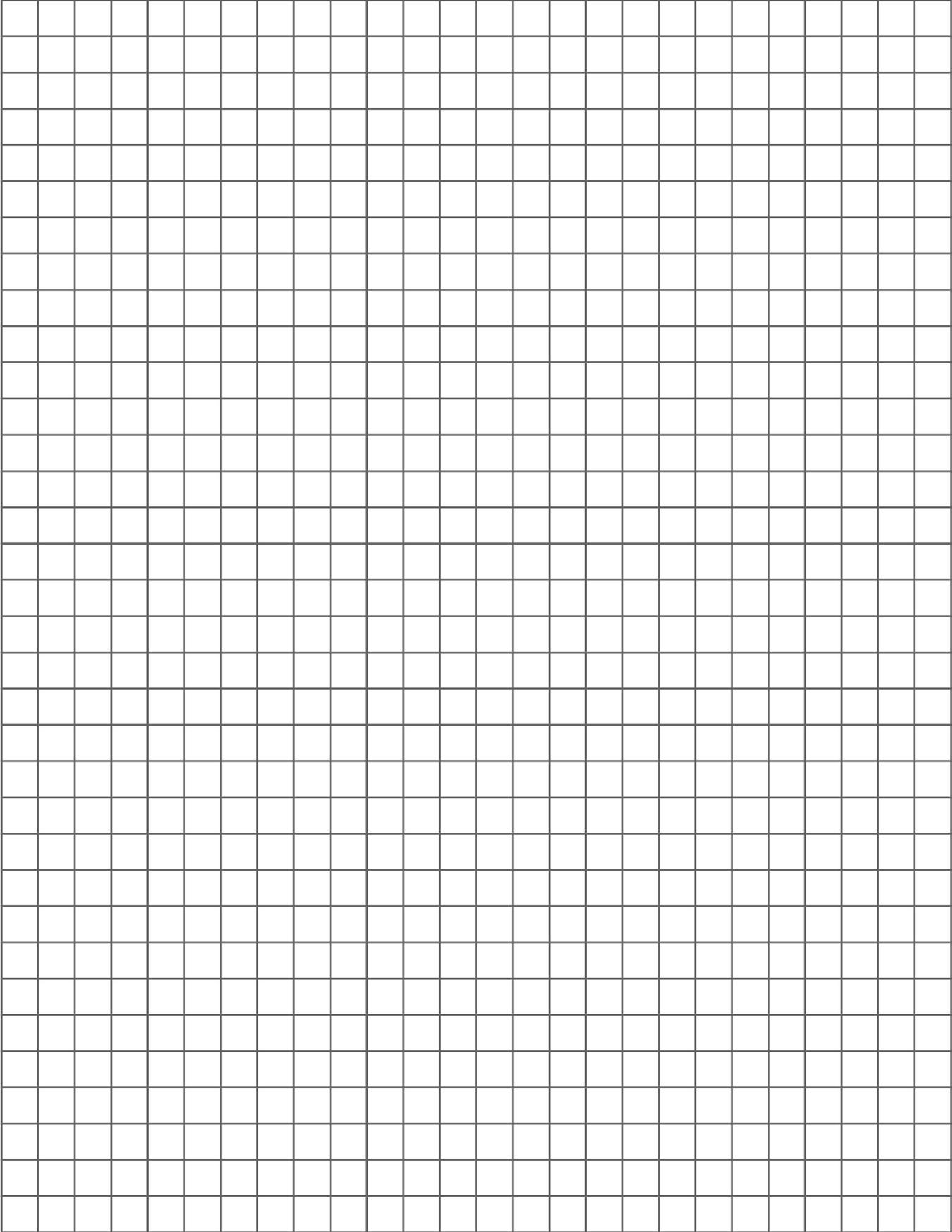
These 8 gardening essential tools and products will help you get started:

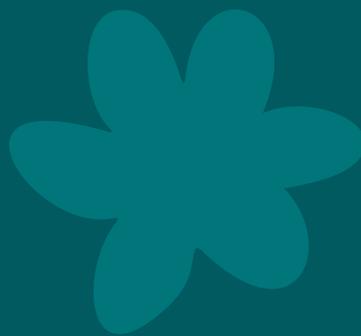
- Measuring tape
- Spade
- Fork
- Hand trowel
- Hand fork
- Rake
- Secateurs
- Compost

# Glossary

- **Evergreen:** An evergreen plant keeps its leaves all year.
- **Deciduous:** A deciduous plant sheds its foliage in winter and produces new leaves in spring.
- **Trees:** Trees are typically large, evergreen or deciduous plants that have a single trunk, although they can be trained into a multi-stem (see below). If your garden is small opt for a species that suits your space, such as an Acer or Amelanchier lamarckii. Your local garden centre will be able to help you choose the best option for your space.
- **Shrubs:** Shrubs are evergreen or deciduous woody plants with several main stems near the ground. Smaller than a tree, they help add form and structure to your garden.
- **Perennials:** Perennials are plants that die back to the ground in the winter and re-emerge the following year.
- **Biennials:** Biennials are plant that live for two years. They typically produce foliage in the first year and flowers the following year. Like perennials, they die back to the ground in the winter and re-emerge the following year.
- **Annuals:** Annuals are plants that live for a year or less. These are great options if you wish to add colour to your garden on a tight budget.
- **Climbers:** Climbers are deciduous and evergreen climbing plants that can be trained to climb up trellises, fences or walls.
- **Bulbs:** Bulbs, such as Daffodils or Tulips, provide seasonal colour. They are planted in the autumn and flower throughout the spring.
- **Topiary:** Topiary is the art or practice of clipping shrubs or trees into ornamental shapes.
- **Multi-stem:** A multi-stem tree is a tree that has two or more stems. These have been trained to grow together by planting two or more single-stemmed trees in one hole or pot.
- **Coppice:** To coppice means to cut a tree or shrub back to ground level periodically to stimulate growth.
- **Espalier:** An espalier is a fruit tree or ornamental shrub whose branches are trained to grow flat against a wall, supported on a lattice.
- **Pleached:** A pleached tree or shrub features branches that are entwined or interlaced to form a hedge or provide cover for an outdoor walkway.

# Grid Sheet





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