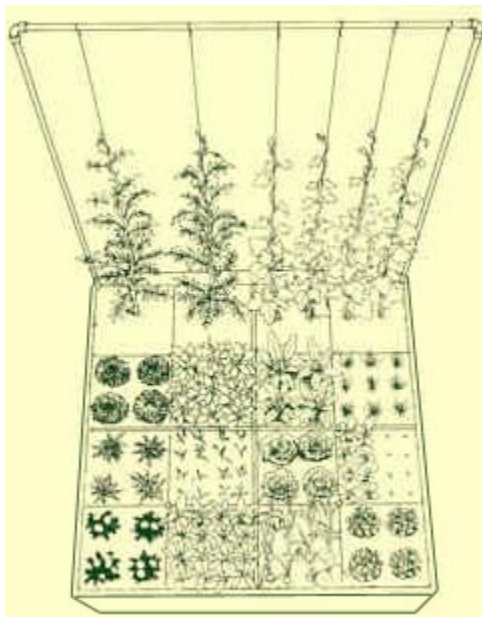


Benefits of a Square Foot Victory Garden

- Requires very little space; 80% less than conventional gardening.
- Can be done in as little as 4' by 4', - or as large as you want.
- Your existing (bad) soil doesn't matter because it's not being used. Start with an ideal soil mix that is weed-free and requires no tilling.
- Uses much less water; only about 20% compared to conventional gardening.
- The planting method requires no thinning and very few seeds.
- All the hard work has been removed - only the enjoyable part remains.
- Can be started in any season.
- Produces up to 5 times the harvest of a conventional garden.
- Makes a great family project, all ages can participate - kids love to garden.

Advantages



New Method Easy to understand

User Friendly Great for beginners

Locate Anywhere Close to your house

Economical Reduces everything 5 to 1

Efficient Twice as much in half the space

Easy to Protect From pests and weather

Earth Friendly Reduce Reuse Recycle

Very Productive Just enough as you need it

The Ten Basics

- 1. LAYOUT** - Arrange your garden in squares, not rows. Lay it out in 4' x 4' planting areas with wide walkways between them.
- 2. BOXES** - Build boxes to hold a new soil mix above ground. Build garden box frames no wider than 4 feet, and 6 to 8 inches deep. The length is not as important, but a recommended size for your *first time* is one frame 4 foot by 4 foot. You can, of course, go smaller. A 2' by 2' works great on patios and 3' by 3' box is ideal for kids. Frames can be made from almost any material except treated wood, which has toxic chemicals that might leach into the soil. 2" by 12" lumber is ideal, and comes in 8' lengths. Most lumber yards will cut it in half at little or no cost. Exact dimensions are not critical. Deck screws work best to fasten the boards together. Suggestion: Rotate or alternate corners to end up with a square inside.
- 3. AISLES** - If you plan on having more than one box, space them 3' to 4' apart to form walking aisles.
- 4. SOIL** - Fill boxes with $\frac{1}{4}$ regular soil, $\frac{1}{4}$ blended compost, $\frac{1}{4}$ peat moss, and $\frac{1}{4}$ coarse vermiculite. A blended compost made from many ingredients provides all the nutrients the plants require (no chemical fertilizers needed). Peat moss and vermiculite help hold moisture and keep the soil loose. It's best to make your own compost from many ingredients but if you have to buy it, make sure it is truly compost. Some stores sell mulch or humus and other ground covers but call it compost. Most commercial compost is made from one or two ingredients so to be safe, don't buy all of one kind but one of each kind until you have enough for your garden. It's highly recommended to make your own compost. That way you'll know exactly what goes into it. When buying vermiculite, be sure to get the coarse grade, and get the more economical 4 cubic foot size bags.

If placing frames over grass you can dig out the grass or cover it with cardboard or landscape cloth to discourage grass and weeds from coming up through your new garden soil.

- 5. GRID** - Make a permanent (or semi-permanent) square foot grid for the top of each box. A MUST! The grid is the unique feature that makes the whole system work so well.

Grids can be made from nearly any material; wood, plastic strips, old venetian blinds, etc. Use screws or rivets to attach them where they cross. On a 4 foot by 4 foot frame, the grid divides the frame into 16 easy-to-manage spaces, for up to 16 different crops. Leave the grid in place all season. The grid can be cut long enough to fit across the top of the box or cut shorter to lay on the soil inside the box.

- 6. CARE** - Since you will NEVER walk on or depress the growing soil, don't make the frames any wider than 4 feet (2 feet, if only one side is accessible). Any wider makes it too difficult to reach in to tend the plants.
- 7. SELECT** - Plant a different flower, vegetable, or herb crop in each square foot. Depending on the mature size of the plant, grow 1, 4, 9, or 16 equally spaced plants per square foot. If the seed packet recommends that the plant spacing be 12" apart, plant one plant per square foot. If 6" spacing; 4 per square foot. If 4" spacing; 9 per square foot. If 3" spacing; 16 per square foot.
- 8. PLANT** - Conserve seeds. Plant only a pinch (2 or 3 seeds) per hole. Place transplants in a slight saucer-shaped depression. Cover, but do not pack the soil. Thinning is all but eliminated. Seeds are not wasted. Extra seeds can be stored cool and dry in your refrigerator (or cool dry place).

9. WATER - Water with a drip irrigation system. To help germinate seeds, overhead water as well.

10. HARVEST - When you finish harvesting a square foot, add compost and replant it with a new and different crop in that square.

Recommendations

Pick an area that gets 6 to 8 hours of sunshine daily.

Stay clear of trees and shrubs where roots and shade may interfere.

Locate it close to the house for convenience. Area should not puddle after a heavy rain.