

Plant a Picture Perfect Garden With Perennials

Most of us enjoy seeing gorgeous gardens pictured in magazines, but few of us attempt to replicate them. The possibility seems overwhelming - not to mention time consuming and expensive.

Guess what? Gardens don't have to be elaborate to be beautiful. The simplest of gardens can make a big splash without breaking your back . or the bank. Perennial gardens add color to your landscape and are great for beginners. Perennials are easy to grow and their colorful blooms return year after year.

A flower garden's location will dictate what types of perennials to plant. Is it mostly sunny or predominately shady? When purchasing plants or seed packets, be sure to check their labels for light requirements. If you're new to gardening, don't be afraid to ask nursery professionals for help. Perennial favorites like daylilies, peonies, black-eyed Susan and purple coneflower work well in most regions.

For picture perfect gardens, pay attention to color and form. Choose plants with complimentary colors and varying heights. If you want to make a powerful statement, group flowers in a mass. A splash of bright zinnias or cheerful daylilies will pack a punch in any yard.

When you're ready to plant, start with good soil. That's the key to healthy plants. Their tender roots need fertile loam to grow and become established. In most areas, soil needs amendment with organic matter before seeds are sown or flowers are planted.

When you plant perennials, remember to leave enough space between them to accommodate their mature size. Spacing directions should be on the pot label or seed package.

To give your garden a polished look, pay attention to edging. Easy Gardener makes a variety of functional edgings and decorative borders to showcase flower and landscape beds.

Functional edging and borders protect gardens from creeping grasses and weeds. They also hold mulch in place. Emerald Edge®, a green pound-in border that comes in manageable four-foot sections, is a best seller in the U.S. Another favorite is the

Adirondack Border. The slatted border, reminiscent of the familiar Adirondack chair back, comes in three colors - white, forest green and sienna red.

For a decorative flair, add an ornamental border like Easy Gardener's Forged Iron Border. It looks like wrought iron and can be double-stacked to create a taller fence-like edge. For further information on Easy Gardener borders, call (800) 327-9462 or visit www.easygardener.com.

Time-crunched gardeners need minimal garden maintenance. This is another reason easy perennials make sense. If you can spare 30 minutes a week, you can maintain a perennial garden. A 10-minute walk around the garden every other day to water and remove weeds should do the trick.



A simple push-in edging like Easy Gardener's Adirondack Border protects gardens from lawn equipment and creeping grass.

Don't be afraid to try your hand at gardening this year. Enjoying a cluster of colorful flowers framed with a beautiful border in your own yard will be far more rewarding than looking at a picture in a magazine!

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