

Digging Deep-Gardening with Cynthia Brian

Growing Garden Resolutions

“If you don't change your beliefs, your life will be like this forever.” – William Somerset Maugham

By February, most of the resolutions made on Jan. 1 have been waylaid. Our dreams of losing weight, becoming more organized, and being a better person might have already turned into nightmares. If we want to be triumphant in life, we need to make conscientious changes or else we are doomed to stagnation. February is the perfect month to create our year's gardening goals. If we do a little at a time, step by step, and commit to success, we will achieve our desires. There is a saying, “by the inch, it's a cinch.” Choose one or two goals per month and make it happen. The only way to predict the future is to create it. To become a better gardener, we need to adopt new ideas and adapt our beliefs. Whatever your level of gardening expertise, you will benefit from several of these suggestions. Get going, get growing.

1. Keep a Garden Journal

Whether you write in a notebook or create a digital diary, keep track of what's happening in your landscape.

2. Ask Questions

Don't be afraid to go to your local nursery and be

inquisitive. Talk to your grandmother, neighbor, or a total stranger if they have a garden or plants you admire. There are no dumb questions. Gardeners are flattered to share their knowledge.

3. Discover Something New

Whether it's planting an emerging specimen or experimenting with garden art, try something new. Go global and experience a specimen from another part of the planet. Grow the world.

4. Educate Yourself

To educate means to draw forth. Take a class, read a book, join a garden club, attend a lecture, watch a documentary, surf the Internet. Whatever gives you pleasure in learning, go to a place of discovery and growth.

5. Share Your Knowledge

Many gardeners developed their passion for the earth (including myself) by following a parent, friend, or relative through the garden. Be a mentor through example and offer your insights to neighbors and friends, and especially to inquisitive children.



Pick purple freesias for February. Amethyst is the color of the month. Photos Cynthia Brian

6. Walk in Your Garden Daily

Stroll through your garden every day to witness the changes. You don't have to necessarily do anything more than enjoy the serenity. By actively seeing your garden, you'll be able to spot problems, find the perfect location for the new birdhouse, and receive nature's exercise benefits.

7. Embrace Composting

Nothing will enhance your garden more than regularly adding organic matter to your soil. Composting is so simple once you get in the habit. I keep a five gallon bucket inside my garage and right outside my kitchen. Add coffee grinds, egg shells, tea bags, shredded newsprint, wood ashes, vegetable scraps and anything biodegradable that you can add to your larger bin or pile. Lawn clippings, leaves, wood shavings, and weeds can all be mixed in. Don't include meat, dog and cat excrement, or diseased plants. If you have chickens or rabbits, their droppings are gold. Chicken manure needs to be aged for two to three years or it will burn your plants. Turn your compost pile every few months and when it smells earthy and crumbles like chocolate cake, spread it around your plants.



Walk in your garden every day and you'll enjoy the path. Azaleas are glorious in February.

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