

Cynthia Brian's Gardener's Guide for September

Gardening at any age

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8. Minimize the BLT activities: bending, lifting, and twisting. I now do my weeding scooting along the ground. I lift only an amount that doesn't hurt my back and I avoid twisting as much as possible. (Sorry Chubby Checker!)
9. Install raised beds for vegetables to decrease the "B"... bending.
10. Use caution when climbing on high ladders.
11. Drink lots of water. It's so easy to get dehydrated while gardening especially when it is warm. My mother taught me that lesson.
12. Keep tools sharpened, cleaned and organized. Always use the proper tool for the job at hand.
13. Repair or replace immediately anything that could be hazardous to the gardening experience. I walk my perimeter daily adjusting rocks, stepping stones, picking up fallen branches, or debris that could lead to a fall or worse.
14. Hire experts when needed.
15. Bathe and wash clothes after every garden work out.
16. Spend at least 20 minutes daily enjoying the beauty and the bounty. My morning ritual is to express gratitude and awe for my garden every morning as I meander through the landscape before going to work. In the evening I appreciate being able to harvest fresh vegetables, fruits, and herbs for our supper.
17. Use all of your senses. Listen, really listen to the sounds of nature. Pay attention to the birds, bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and insects. Embrace the sounds of the breeze whistling through the trees, breathe in the sweet fragrance of the flowers, and taste the peppery flavor of the nasturtium. Feel the velvety texture of lamb's ear and avoid the prickles of the cactus. Look around you and truly see the unique kaleidoscope of flora and fauna.
18. Make gardening a family affair. Encourage your spouse, partner, children and grandchildren to dig in the dirt with you.

Practicing the art of gardening is an activity that reaps benefits for our physical fitness and spiritual wellbeing. It is a hobby with measureable perks. Be alert and consider safety first. With joy and abandonment, we will be able to frolic in our garden playgrounds for a lifetime until we just spade away!



A tree of green persimmons.



Peace lily or Sail plant offers immune boosting chemicals called phytoncides to keep indoor air fresh.