

Choosing a
bird feeder

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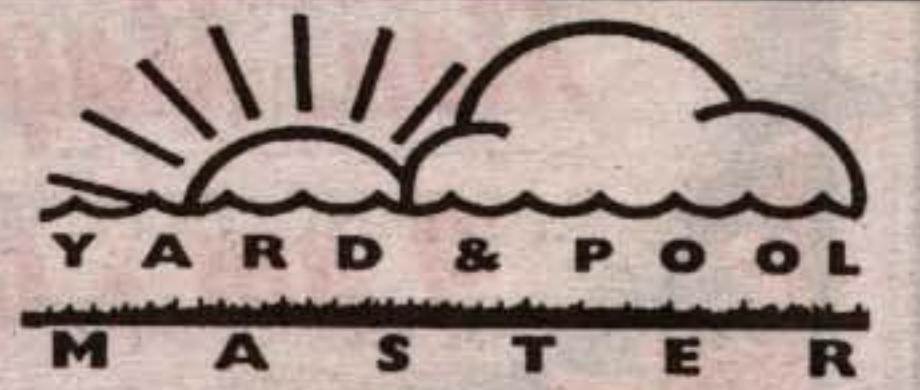


Mower
safety

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Home, Lawn & Garden

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No matter how busy you are, you can find time for gardening

Busy people have little time to garden. But, perhaps a little time here and there will suffice, says David W. Sams, a gardening specialist with the Agricultural Extension Service at the University of Tennessee.

"Begin by paring the plot down to size," he said. "More can be grown in a well-cared for small plot than an untended larger area."

Next, improve the site, he said. Add humus before planting and mulch afterward. Till in kitchen refuse and spent garden plants.

"By doing this, your soil will retain moisture longer and garden plants will grow more vigorously," he said. "The vigorous plants will shade out most of the weeds, and mulch will make the rest of the weeds easy to pull out."

Grow things that flower or produce amply and over a long season. A tomato plant, for example, can provide fruit for two to three months, while a corn plant will produce only one or two ears.

"Use intensive gardening techniques," Sams said. Wide rows, double rows, plant supports and multiple plantings will all provide more reward for time spent in the garden.

The gardening specialist also suggests keeping ahead of tasks. "Remove weeds when they're small," he said. "Control insects and disease when they first appear."

Harvest vegetables or cut flowers at the proper stage, he said. "Quality will be better and new flowers and fruit will not be inhibited by the overmature fruit or seed pods."

Mix work with pleasure. Shell peas, for example, while watching television.

Work with the weather whenever possible. Hoe or pull weeds on sunny mornings so the sun will finish off the weeds. Transplant on a cloudy day or in the evening to give the young plants the best start.

"Remember," Sams said, "short periods of work can provide large rewards. Take 10 minutes now and then to spray the eggplant, harvest a row of beans or transplant a few plants."

You'll be less pressured and not so hot and tired."



Ann Thorpe of Acton was one of the many people who were picking over the flowering plants at the Acton Horticultural Society's annual plant sale held Saturday in the parking lot of the Olde Hide House.

Photo by Christine Smyth

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