

Get an early start on growing little gardeners

If there was ever a match made in heaven, it's kids and dirt. They seem to be magically drawn to each other, as any parent will attest. Boys and girls alike love to dig into the soil before they're even able to walk. So with hands already behaving like miniature tillers, it makes sense to steer them into the garden.

Most kids want to emulate their parents' gardening duties anyway, so coaxing is generally not needed. In fact, many a mom or dad has had to shoo their little ones away from new seed beds, or pry sharp garden tools out of their hands. But rather than stifle the children's urge to sow and reap, it's actually easier to give them their own patch of land to work.

To start, decide on a suitable plot for a garden of a manageable size. A six-foot square is a decent size for a youngster just getting started, though some plants may require a bit more room. Choose a sunny spot, preferably one easily viewed from a window. Children like to work independently, but parents may wish to supervise from a safe distance. Allow children to mark off their plots of land as their own territory; encourage them to paint a wooden sign that designates their plot as "Scott's Farm" or "Cindy's Veggies." Eventually, they may want to bring in their own decorations, such as small plastic farm animals or Pokemon figures.



Remember, it's their space; let them go a little nuts.

Next, decide with your children what their garden will grow.

See KIDS, pg. 4

Confused by the maze of information?



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