KPOV – *The Point*

Gardening: Get Good at It

“Holiday Gift Ideas”

December 21, 2021

December is a month for gift giving, whether you celebrate Hanukkah, Christmas, Ramadan, or Kwanzaa.  For the special gardeners on your list, the choices are many.

Gardening books and videos are always a welcomed gift

For the serious gardener you might consider a research based reference book to help tackle specific garden needs. A few suggestions are:

* + What’s wrong with my plant
  + The Pruner’s Bible
  + Gaia’s Garden about permaculture or the book
  + Starting from Seed

Gardening kits are a great way to inspire new gardeners. Actually, even experienced gardeners have fun with these. Most can be used indoors over winter, too, so you don’t have to wait months to garden. Look for succulents, herbs and bulbs in kits. Gardening is experimenting, so have fun with it!

If your gardener is also a cook, having a readymade supply of [Shiitake mushrooms](http://www.gmushrooms.org/product/shiitake/) will be a giant hit. There are kits that make it fun and easy to grow fresh mushrooms indoors. Some even feature a mushroom growing log that can be grown just like a common houseplant.

Potted plants also make ideal gifts or decorations for the home.  In addition to the traditional poinsettia, most garden centers carry azaleas, cyclamens and other colorful plants "programmed" to bloom this month. When buying these and other holiday plants, check the foliage and flowers carefully for signs of insects, such as whitefly.  The plant should have healthy, lush green foliage, and exhibit no signs of wilting or droopiness. If it’s a gift, add instructions for caring for the plant which I included on our website.

Many amateur horticulturists garden for the birds as well as their family. A year-round birdfeeder with a container of appropriate seed will help birds that winter over in Central Oregon. Our local library even has books on how to make a birdhouse if you want to create a special hand-crafted gift. The American Bird Conservancy’s BirdTape which helps birds avoid colliding with patio doors and windows, makes a great stocking stuffer.

You’ve heard the phrase “shop locally” so investigate small local shops. Your neighbors own them and they put their money right back into the community with taxes and their own purchases. By the way, don’t forget to look in the newspaper and online for arts and craft fairs for holiday shopping ideas.

I think my favorite gift to give and to receive is the “Intangible Gift”. Sometimes gardeners need a helping hand. Create a gift certificate from yourself, and give your time to help out through the busy season. Offer to organize the shed, sort the nursery pots, build raised beds, create a walkway, or till up a new flowerbed. Plan a trip to a botanical garden once a month to watch the seasons come and go. Make a booklet of ‘tickets’ with dates and what you might see. The Oregon Garden in Silverton is a great place to start.

Whatever Holiday you celebrate, fill it with friends, family and joy. For answers to all your garden questions, visit our website: [gocomga.com](http://www.gocomga.com) and click on the KPOV tab on the orange bar where you’ll find this transcript with additional stocking stuffers, a list of gardening books and care instructions for new house plants. This has been Gardening: Get Good At It on KPOV’s *The Point*.

BOOK LIST:

The Pruner’s Bible by Steve Bradley

What’s wrong with my plant by David Deardorff & Kathryn Wadsworth

Gaia’s Garden by Toby Hemenway

Guide to Common Grasses in Central Oregon by Paul McMillian

Fun reading:

Sagebrush Country – A wildflower Sanctuary by Ronald Taylor

Terrarium Craft by Amy Bryant Aiello & Kate Bryant

Quick and Easy Container Gardening by Tessa Evelegh

Good Bug, Bad Bug by Jessica Walliser

POTTED PLANT INFORMATION

Wrap the plant well in newspapers or a brown paper bag for transport from the store to car and car to home to prevent cold injury.  Provide a small plastic dish for water drainage along with the plant. These are available at garden centers.

ALSO: If you potted up daffodils, tulips, or other bulbs in early fall for winter forcing, check periodically to make sure soil is moist.  When signs of growth appear, bring them into the light and place in a cool location with indirect light.  In seven to 10 days, move into bright light and watch them burst into bloom.

MAKE A TAG FOR A POTTED PLANT GIFT AND INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

Remove the decorative foil or plastic sleeve and make a hole in the bottom so water can drain out.  If the roots stay too wet they can rot.   Place away from drafts, heat sources, and ventilating ducts.  Water when the soil is dry to the touch.

ADDITIONAL STOCKING STUFFERS:

Kneeling pad

Plant labels

Seeds

Gloves & garden hat with brim

Row cover

Wind Chimes

Resources:

[www.colostate.edu/Dept/CoopExt/4dmg/Plans/winter2.htm](http://www.colostate.edu/Dept/CoopExt/4dmg/Plans/winter2.htm) - winter care of houseplants

www.finegardening.com

abcbirds.org - American Bird Conservancy

Personal garden reference library