

KPOV – *The Point*
Gardening: Get Good At It
“Some Good Things Not to Do – Part 2”
May 8, 2018

This is part 2 on “some good things not to do” or common gardening mistakes which aired earlier.

Let’s start with **‘Failing to Adequately Prepare the Soil for Planting’**:

Most Central Oregon soils are coarse, have a sandy texture and tend to be very sterile with minimal organic matter in them. These soils need to be amended with organic material such as compost or aged manure to improve water holding capacity. Organic matter will also increase soil microorganism activity levels, and improve the overall health of the soil. The soil pH is generally between 6.0 and 7.0 which is neutral and suitable for most plants. In some areas the soil may be a bit more alkaline (pH above 7.0) and require some soil amendments to reduce the pH. A soil test is beneficial in determining soil pH and the nutrient analysis of your soil.

Spacing Issues:

Although the glossy magazine pictures of gardens jam-packed with plants are pretty, cramming plants together can cause all kinds of problems. Moisture and nutrient levels are depleted and air circulation declines. Plants and seeds usually come with spacing instructions, so try to follow them. When in doubt, leave more space in between plants rather than less.

Next is Planting at the Wrong Time of Year:

Spring flowering bulbs should be planted in the fall in our area. Perennials benefit from fall planting, thus giving them a chance to establish roots before winter. If you're a vegetable gardener, learn which veggies are considered "cool weather" crops and stick to planting them at the proper time.

The last common mistake I’m going to cover is Improper Pruning Techniques:

Cutting off too much of any plant can result in death. Not cutting back at all can limit blooming. Trimming at the wrong time can expose some plants to pest and diseases. So, what's the happy medium?

Proper pruning enhances the beauty of almost any landscape tree and shrub, while improper pruning can ruin or greatly reduce its landscape potential. In most cases, it is better not to prune than to do it incorrectly.

Pruning, like any other skill, requires knowing what you are doing to achieve success. Remember that pruning is the removal or reduction of certain plant parts that are not required, that are no longer effective, or that are of no use to the plant.

It is done to supply additional energy for the development of flowers, fruits, and limbs that remain on the plant. By definition, pruning essentially involves removing plant parts to improve the health, landscape effect, or value of the plant. Once the objectives are determined and a few basic principles understood, pruning primarily is a matter of common sense.

The necessity for pruning can be reduced or eliminated by selecting the proper plant for the location. Plants that might grow too large for the site, are not entirely hardy, or become unsightly with age should be used wisely and kept to a minimum in the landscape plan.

Advances in plant breeding and selection in the nursery industry provide a wide assortment of plants requiring little or no pruning. However, even the most suitable landscape plants often require some pruning.

Remember - Reasons for Pruning are:

To train the plant

To maintain plant health

To improve the quality of flowers, fruit, foliage or stems

And To restrict growth

For answers to all your garden questions, visit our website:

gocomga.com and click on the KPOV tab on the orange bar. This has been Gardening: Get Good At It. Thanks for listening.

Resources:

http://192.168.1.1:8181/http://extension.oregonstate.edu/deschutes/sites/default/files/Horticulture/pruninglstr_eeseb1619part1.pdf

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/deschutes/garden-publications>

http://extension.oregonstate.edu/deschutes/sites/default/files/GN1_CO_Climate_R1.pdf