



# Stay-At-Home Ideas for Gardening

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The COVID-19 Pandemic has disrupted and affected lives around the world. Social distancing has caused economic challenges for both businesses and families. We are all feeling the wrath of this pandemic with much uncertainty and unrest about the near future. We are resilient, and when faced with adversity that affects our families, we immediately think of ways to address these issues. Now that families are spending time at home due to the shelter in-place, feed store owners are reporting an increase in sales of vegetable seeds and transplant sales. They are well above average at- this- time. I recently spoke with several experienced gardeners and novice gardeners about the uncertainty of food supplies and the price of vegetables due to COVID-19. Gardening can be the answer to many of the concerns about the availability of a ready food source for many people.

There are many benefits to gardening. Gardening relieves stress, lowers your blood pressure and provides great exercise. Growing your own food provides healthy eating opportunities. During these economic times and this COVID 19 pandemic shelter-in-place allows a family an opportunity to spend time together producing edible plants. We are truly blessed to live in an area where we have a choice of growing any kind of vegetable.

Three of the most used methods of gardening for our area include traditional planting of fruits or vegetables directly in the soil. Perhaps a family project in a designated area in the backyard.

A container garden made of feed tubs, barrels planter boxes, etc. It is important that the container you use that will accommodate the roots of vegetables that you are growing. The container should have adequate drainage and should be free of any chemical residue that may harm the plants or humans. A raised bed is becoming the most popular choice of gardening in our area.



*An example of a raised bed garden.*

They are very attractive to the landscape, provide an opportunity to grow more food in less space. Therefore, allowing you to grow more food in less space. People choose raised bed have fewer weeds and less runoff. Beds can be constructed with cedar lumber, pine, redwood, bricks and concrete blocks. Remember, a garden site needs full sun, well-drained soil and fertilizer. (Organic or commercial). You will need to keep an eye out for weeds, disease and insects. Always keep in mind, soil testing should be considered months ahead of planting.