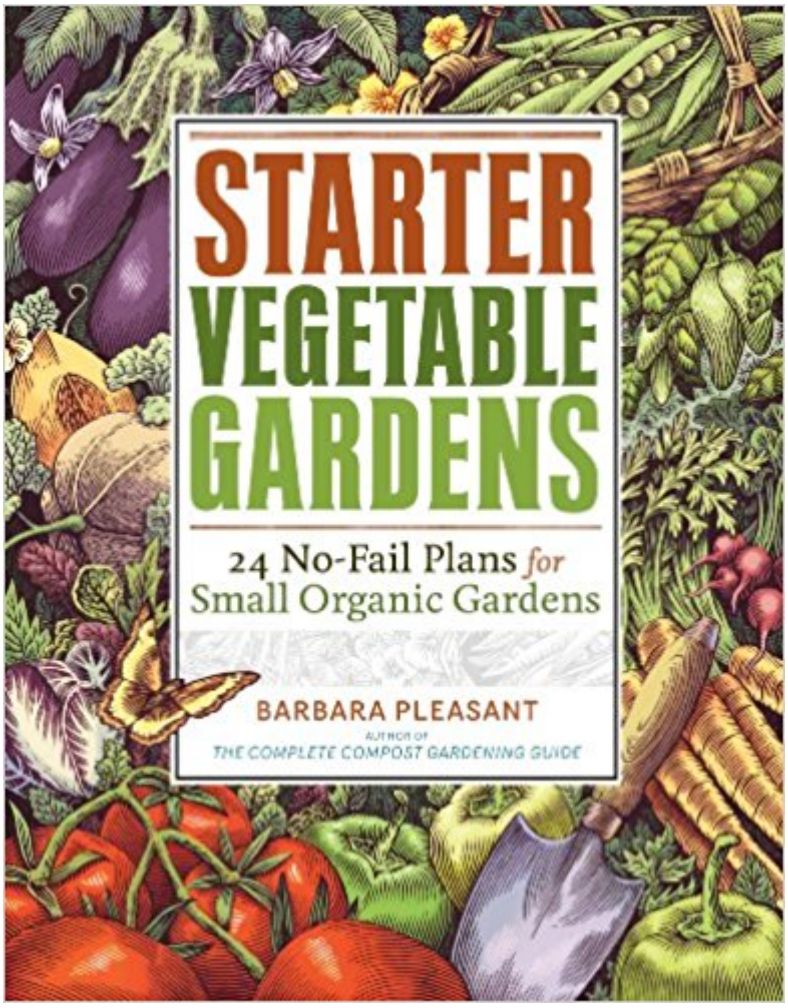
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Starter Vegetable Gardens: 24 No-Fail Plans For Small Organic Gardens



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Synopsis

Develop your green thumb as you learn to grow your own food. In this introductory guide to growing vegetables, Barbara Pleasant addresses common problems that first-time gardeners encounter. Using simple language and illustrated garden layouts, Pleasant shows you how to start, maintain, and eventually expand an organic vegetable garden in even the tiniest backyard. With handy tips on enriching soil, planting schedules, watering, fighting pests, and more, youÃ¢â ¬â„¢ll quickly discover how easy it is to enjoy your own homegrown vegetables.Ã Â

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Fueled by the localvore movement and a tightened economy, more people are motivated to grow their own vegetables, and yet few aspects of gardening are quite as daunting. Sowing seeds! Combating pests! Harvesting zucchini! It can all be a little overwhelming for the inexperienced gardener. With a clean, crisp, foolproof approach, Pleasant takes the fear out of food gardening in a must-have resource that will appeal to both neophytes and experienced gardeners. From simple bag gardens to bountiful food cornucopias, each garden plan is a symphony in simplicity, laid out with precise lists of materials and plants based on detailed landscape plans suitable for small city gardens as well as larger suburban backyards. Along with year-by-year overviews that allow gardeners to anticipate growth and adapt to changes, Pleasant provides essential cultivation and maintenance techniques, and offers surefire recommendations for top-producing vegetables and herbs. --Carol Haggas

Barbara Pleasant has been covering organic gardening and self-sufficient living for more than 30 years. A contributing editor to Mother Earth News, Pleasant has garnered multiple awards from the Garden Writers Association and the American Nursery and Landscape Association. She has written books on topics ranging from compost to weeds, including Homegrown Pantry, Starter Vegetable Gardens, The Complete Compost Gardening Guide (with Deborah L. Martin), The Complete Houseplant Survival Manual, The GardenerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Bug Book, The GardenerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Weed Book, The GardenerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Guide to Plant Diseases, and Garden Stone. Her columns and articles appear regularly in Mother Earth Living magazine and at GrowVeg.com and on other informational websites. Pleasant lives in Virginia, where she grows vegetables, herbs, and fruits along with a few chickens, who all have names.Ã Â

I love this gardening book. I have had a variety of gardens in my life, but they have almost always been haphazard. My first was a plot in the college community garden, a free-flowing, random, weed-choked wilderness created by well-meaning hippies with lots of enthusiasm but no knowledge. Some years later, I moved to a farm and started something way too ambitious for a near-beginner, resulting in overwork and frustration. Since then I've had several different herb and flower gardens, usually initiated when I have been given plants by kind friends and needed to dig a place to plant them, pronto. I've tried borders, raised beds, all sorts of beds, and my efforts to alter and rearrange and improve these over the years have created more chaos than beauty.Needless to say, none of these gardens was a great success, and all for the same reason: they lacked planning. I WANTED to plan-- but most of the books I've looked to for guidance were way too ambitious, making gardening seem like an inherently overwhelming task that was never going to bring me the peaceful hours outdoors, the beauty, or the bounty or produce that I yearned for. It felt more like blood, sweat, and tears. It's especially shameful because I'm both an herbalist and a great cook, yet I've been a total flop as a gardener!Then I found this book. It's the perfect book for someone like me to step back, take a breath, and start anew. Forget all those failed gardens, and those hefty books filled with complicated garden designs that I would never be able to execute much less afford. This book reeeaaallly simplifies gardening for the beginner (though there are a few plans for more experienced folk). I have decided to consider myself a rank beginner, and start over with this book.It's not just a feel-good pep talk. The book truly is laid out very simply. Several basic plans are given: a border garden, a front-yard vegetable garden (with enough beauty so the neighbors will be glad you're gardening in the front yard), even a garden that has you starting out planting in opened

bags of topsoil (trust me, it’s a great idea). Several other plans are given for different climates, or different specialty gardens (such as the Cajun Spice garden-- tempting-- and more).For each garden plan, you are told step by simple step what to do. You are told exactly what to buy. You are guided through the whole season. The best part is, each garden starts off modestly the first year as you get your bearings, and expands in years two and three until you have a fully-established garden.It might seem that being told exactly what to plant where would squelch creativity. Well, for one thing, I didn’t WANT to be creative this time ’round, I wanted to be told exactly what to do. But for another thing, when you know why each type of plant has been chosen for a particular spot in the garden, that makes EASIER to substitute, should you want to, with a plant having similar properties.The book is full of very good colored drawings and photographs. The one thing lacking is something I’d really like to see: a photo of each type of garden, fully realized, or even fully laid out the first year. The absence of such photos makes me wonder if the author actually planted each of these gardens. But even if she did not, it does not invalidate the book; no doubt she has combined elements of real gardens from real experience. Her experience is obvious throughout the book and she gives lots of helpful advice.But not too much. Because the beauty of this book is that it’s not overwhelming. This year, I finally have an understandable, workable garden plan, and I’m just waiting for the weather to warm up a bit to put it into action!

I am a novice/newbie gardener. My family and I are starting our first vegetable garden this summer (2015). For this price, this book is a fantastic find! First, it’s gorgeous. The pages are beautiful. It’s a joy to read and glance at. I’m a planner and an organizer and this book helps me with exactly that! I love, love, love how the author takes the garden plans and breaks them down into 3 year task lists and tells you specifically WHAT to do for each plant and at which time. I would definitely buy this again and I HIGHLY recommend this for anyone just starting out or for anyone wanting a new, beautiful book, full color, photos, high quality papers, tips, FYIs, that’s well-written. I would even give this book as a gift! What a gem.

I love this book. It has tons of suggestions for planning a garden. It could be used by a new gardener to help take away some of the planning stress, or even for them to duplicate one of the gardens in the book and be able to expand on their new garden each year as they gain experience.The same could be said for the experienced gardener who perhaps feels that they could be doing more to have a larger, better harvest.It is a book I would recommend.

Originally checked this book out from the library and renewed it twice it was so helpful to me as a brand new gardener. Lots of pictures and tips and stays away from becoming droll. My family can probably blame this book for turning me into the garden nerd I am now.

I love this book!! Checked it out at the library and finally decided I wanted it to have. It really works, I have used her plans to start gardens at two different homes. Our current farm has very poor soil and it has taken me 3 years to get a healthy productive garden growing.

We are getting ready to buy our forever home and I would like a garden. This book is perfect for helping figure out how to start one. Not too complicated but it didn't make me feel like an idiot either! The book itself is large, but not fat. They didn't cram a whole bunch of filler blaa, blaa talk in it just to make it look more substantial. It didn't need it. Perfect just the way it is!

Great.

The book is a great resource for gardeners wanting to start growing their own vegetables. There are a variety of plans for most situations and having a 3-year follow-through to build up to that goal helps to keep from being overwhelmed at the start of the project. There are chapters regarding horticulture in general and specific information on crop varieties to help decide what to plant.

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