

How-To Guide

- Start small since a garden bed can be more work than you think. A 50 SF garden bed (for example 6' x 9') will require some serious labor.



- Kill any existing grass under a tarp or newspaper.
- Skim surface with a flat shovel to remove grass roots to help prevent grass from returning. If any grass returns, hand weed to remove.
- Bust sod and work in soil amendments to at least 6 inches.
- Rake smooth.
- Plant your new plants as desired.
- Top-dress with at least two inches of mulch. Pine bark nuggets, wood chips, or pine straw all are good mulches.
- Water deeply and consistently until plants are well established. New plants will benefit from at least three inches of water per week, whether from rain or irrigation.

- In the fall, leave dead stalks for a sculptural look and to provide food for the birds, or cut back to the ground, depending upon your preference. Mulch with your fallen leaves, preferably shredded. One popular technique is to spread shredded or whole leaves on your native flower bed and spread pine park, wood chips, or pine straw on top to hold down the leaves. Leaves are like gold for your garden. They will decompose and the organic bits will work their way into your soil and foster a healthy soil. Every year, the soil will get better and better.



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