



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
*Cooperative Extension Service*

## Extension Notes

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AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

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### Try a Small-Scale Garden This Year

People living in town might not think they have the space to garden, but that is not the case. A University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service publication, ID-248: Gardening in Small Spaces, shows you how you can garden in a small area.

Besides space, an issue that may limit gardening is sunlight. Most vegetables require full sun, meaning six or more hours of direct sunlight each day. If you have an open yard free of tall trees or a south-facing sunny patio, you should have sufficient light. If you only get four hours or so of light, try lettuce, spinach and radishes for the spring garden, or Swiss chard, cucumbers or winter squash for the summer garden.

Gardening with limited space is best done in raised beds in the yard or containers for the patio. Beds can be made of many materials such as wood, plastic, vinyl or concrete blocks. Kill or cover any existing grass within the bed area and add 6 to 8 inches of amended soil. Amended soil includes 25% garden soil and 75% organic matter such as a mixture of peat, humus and compost. Little fertilizer should be needed if the mix contains at least 25% compost.

For patio gardening, use pots or other containers to grow vegetables. These containers should be filled with potting soil, not garden soil. Use containers large enough to provide soil for good plant root growth. Plants in containers will need occasional fertilizer. Consult the fertilizer label for specific instructions. Larger pots will need less frequent watering than small pots, although container vegetables may need water once a day in the heat of summer. Make sure there are drainage holes to allow excess water to escape the pot. A five-gallon bucket is the perfect size for a tomato, while a 10-inch pot will hold a hot pepper plant.

The Gardening in Small Spaces publication includes information on plant spacing for beds and containers. A companion publication, ID-128: Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky, provides information on planting dates and care instructions for most vegetables. Both publications are available online. Gardening in Small Spaces is available at <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ID/ID248/ID248.pdf>. Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky is at <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/id/id128/id128.pdf>. You can also contact your Carter County Extension Office of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service for a copy of either publication or for additional gardening information.

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