

## ESSENTIAL GARDEN TOOLS ANDS THEIR MAINTAINENCE

The key to easier and more successful garden work is having at hand and taking care of the correct tools. Below is a list of essential tools to meet most of your gardening needs, however, before begging, borrowing or buying tools you should find a proper storage space for them for maintenance and security purposes.

TOOL	PURPOSE OR USAGE
Riddle	Heavy wooden frame with wire screen for shifting debris from soil.
Planting shovel	For light work, small plantings.
Crowbar	Removing rocks and embedded debris.
File	Sharpening tools.
Spading fork or spade	Turning compost heap, digging holes, digging up plants or debris.
Cultivator	Loosening soil, removing weeds.
Broom or fan rake	Raking leaves or rubbish.
Shears	Pruning, clipping, trimming.
Tamper	Smoothing newly dug garden beds.
Garden hand tools	Trowel, hand fork, cultivator-small holes, planting bulbs, weeding loosening soil.
Hose and spray nozzle hydrant adapter	To attach hose to hydrant.
Clippers	Trimming and cutting.
Wheelbarrow, hand truck and old kitchen knife	Good for digging up the random weed.
Watering and dabble	For planting seeds and seedlings.
Edger	For trimming lawns, paths.
Metal rake	Smoothing soil after planting, removing debris.
Hoes	For turning soil, deep cultivation.
Common hand tools	Hammer, nails, screwdrivers, pliers, wire cutters.
Steaks, ties, grass whip or scythe	For cutting tall grasses, weed. Note* right hand scythe must be used only for right handers; lefties must purchase left handed scythe, grass whip or sickle
Dolly	Cart debris out, transport trees.
Heavy duty shovel sticks and twine or planting line	For laying out rows.
Buckets and baskets	For water, compost, tools and weeds.
Pick axe	For loosening compacted debris, etc. Note* You can hurt your back (and other people) if you do not use a pickaxe, sledgehammer or similar tool properly. Grasp tool with one hand at the top and one hand at the base down to meet the hand at the top of the handle.

### STORAGE AREA

Once you have acquired a basic tool collection it should be stored neatly in a protected, secure spot: a large closet, shed, cellar or garage with a strong lock. Racks, pegs and shelves should be constructed so each tool has its own place.

### MAINTAINANCE

Proper tool maintenance is a must, otherwise all your invested time and money in tool acquisition is wasted. The Brooklyn Botanical Garden has used many of the same tools since 1908, because they are so cleaned, oiled and carefully put away after each and every use.

1. Metal tools with no movable parts can be plunged into a trough filled with an oil and sand mixture (coarse dry sand mixed with any oil until a dry oily feeling is achieved). Too much oil makes the tools difficult to handle. Storing tools in this manner prevents rust; the oil coating makes cleaning easier after use. Caution: Oil is a highly combustible material. Be sure that the trough is in a well-ventilated place, that there are no oily rags nearby, and that nobody smokes in the area.
2. When gardening, stand tools vertically against a fence or wall. Tools can injure and be injured if left face up on the ground.
3. To rejuvenate old tools, sandpaper and oil the metal parts, using rust remover if necessary. Sandpaper nicked and splintery wooden handles paint the handles bright colors for easy identification.
4. Hoses should be thoroughly drained before storage and kept away from oil, constant hot sunlight and freezing. Avoid running over the hose or letting it kink. Be sure to drain and remove hose to indoor storage area before Autumn frost.
5. Sharp tools make garden work easier.  
To sharpen hoe: Clamp the shank in a vise. File on the down stroke along the face only, making the strokes at a 30-degree angle. File into the blade to remove any ragged metal burrs on the edge.

To sharpen shovels: Clamp the shank in a vise. File around the rim of the shovel face using down strokes at a fairly deep angle.

To sharpen mowers: (manual) Apply coarse valve grinding compound to stationary blade, and run mower backwards (some do not reverse) or touch up blades with a file very carefully as it must be done evenly or, if badly worn or nicked take to a professional.