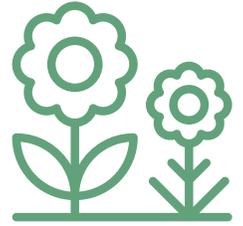




Invasive Species  
Council of BC

HOW TO TAKE ACTION

# Design an Invasive Species Free Garden



## WHAT IS AN INVASIVES-FREE GARDEN?

Invasive plants are known to be quite beautiful and are often found in people’s gardens. However, they can have significant impacts to human health, native biodiversity and the economy. Invasive species can even impact your yard and your neighbourhood! If you love gardening or are looking to spruce up your outdoor spaces around your home, you should consider planting an invasive-free garden using native or exotic, non-invasive plants.

## SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- » Shovel
- » Gardening gloves
- » Hand trowel
- » Wheelbarrow (optional)
- » Watering hose
- » Kneeling pad (optional)
- » Rake

## STEPS

Depending on your gardening knowledge and experience, starting your garden can seem like a walk in the park or a daunting experience. Here are a few tips to get your garden started.

### Step 1

Pick a spot! The amount of sunlight your garden receives is a major factor in choosing plants for your space. Gardens, specifically flower gardens, typically require 6-8 hours of full sun each day to thrive, so choose the sunniest area you can! Observe your yard and note where the sunny spots are. Does your yard get little or no sun? No problem. There are tons of non-invasive plant species, like ferns, that thrive in the shade! It also helps if the garden area is as flat as possible. Sloping gardens can be more complex to manage.

### Step 2

Clear the ground and prepare your planting beds. First, you will want to remove all weeds and sod from your garden area. Next, you want to loosen the soil before planting to help the roots grow more easily and provide easy access to water and nutrients.

### Step 3

Now it is time to pick the plants for your garden. There are a wide variety of plants you can choose and the seemingly endless options at the garden centre may seem overwhelming! It is often hard to identify which species may or may not be invasive.

However, luckily for us we can refer to ISCBC’s PlantWise program to help identify invasive plants and choose native or non-invasive alternatives. A major component to the PlantWise program is Grow Me Instead. Grow Me Instead informs gardeners about horticulture’s most “unwanted” invasive plants in BC.

## WHAT IS THE PLANTWISE PROGRAM?

PlantWise is a provincial program that supports the horticulture industry’s transition to become invasive-free. Want to learn more about becoming PlantWise? Visit [plantwise.ca](http://plantwise.ca).

## WHEN SHOULD I PLANT MY FLOWERS?

It is best to plant flowers in spring, well after the last frost date and when it’s not too hot or sunny. This gives the plants time to establish roots before the hot and dry season. For perennial flowers, you could even plant them as late as early fall!

## HOW DOES THIS PROJECT CONTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY SERVICE?

There are a variety of benefits to planting an invasives-free garden! First, it helps to restore BC’s natural biodiversity and support healthy ecosystems. Another benefit of invasive-free gardens is that it can act as an important refuge for pollinators, birds, small animals and bugs. Combined with other bits of nature surrounding your home, gardens can act as linkages that help plants and animals integrate into the urban landscape.