Gardening in Challenging Spaces

Urban Farm Design, Installation, & Coaching
Typical DC Area Yard

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LOVE & CARROTS
First thing’s FIRST

PLAN: Use what you have to optimize garden conditions

1. **Sunlight**: Maximize Sunlight Hours

2. **Soil & Nutrients**: Modify your garden Set Up

3. **Water**: Install Irrigation

4. **Crops**: Guidance & Creativity!
1. Maximize Sunlight

Sunlight & Garden Placement

Where are your shadows?

How many hours of sunlight per day?

Summer vs Spring and Fall
1. Maximize Sunlight

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How many hours of sunlight per day?

Summer vs Spring and Fall
1. Maximize Sunlight
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2. Soil & Nutrients

Raised Beds

Improve Soil, Drainage, and Space Efficiency
2. Soil & Nutrients

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Use BIG Pots: Avoid getting root bound
2. Soil & Nutrients
3. Install Irrigation

Irrigation is worth it.

- Under watering can lead to stressed plants
  - Early fruiting
  - Disease
  - Bolting
  - Plant death

- Be free to travel
4. Crops & Creativity: Small Spaces

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Small Spaces

Maximize Space Efficiency

- 3 or 4’ wide Raised Beds
- Narrow Paths: 12” to 18” wide
Small Spaces

Taylor Your Crop List:

Vegetables that mature SLOWLY and have LOW Yield/SF:

- Carrots
- Beets
- Onions
- Potatoes
- Winter Squash
- Okra
- Corn
Small Spaces

Look for Continual Harvest

HIGH Yield/SF:

- Cherry Tomatoes
  - Supersweet 100
  - Sungold
- Summer Squash
  - Golden Arrow
  - Raven, Romanesco
- Most Herbs
- Greens
  - Swiss Chard
  - Kale
  - Collards
  - Asian Greens
  - Salad Mixes
- Peppers
  - Shishito
  - Fish
  - Jimmy Nardello
- Eggplant
  - Orient Express
- Cucumbers
  - Marketmore 76
- Beans
  - Jade
  - Golden Butterwax
Small Spaces

Eat your Thinnings

- Thinning promotes strong growth
- Thin every 2 weeks so that plants are “touching, not crowding”
- Enjoy a microgreen harvest every 2 weeks!
- NOT: Nightshades or Cucurbits
Small Spaces

Cut and Come-Again Greens

- Get multiple greens harvests - Cut just above the point of growth
Small Spaces

Grow vertically

- Smaller Tomatoes
  - Sungolds!
  - San Marzano Sauce
  - Amish Paste

- Climbing Cucurbits
  - Diva Cucumbers
  - Trombocino Squash

- Pole Beans:
  - Scarlett Runner
  - Blue Lake

- Snap Peas
  - Sugar Anne

- Malabar Spinach
Small Spaces

Grow vertically
Small Spaces

Grow vertically
Small Spaces

Grow vertically
Small Spaces

Under-sowing:

- Layer quick growing crops under young slow-growing crops
  - Baby greens under kale
  - Radishes around squash
  - Cilantro under Peppers

- Seed new crops under fading old crops, before they are pulled
  - Cucumbers under Peas
  - Carrots under Tomatoes
  - Lettuce under onions
4. Crops & Creativity: Shady Spaces

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Shady Spaces

1. Go where the sun is

2. Taylor your crop list
   - Focus on smaller fruits or leafy crops
   - Grow perennials

3. Plant more to accommodate for slower growth
Shady Spaces

5-6 Hours of Sun

- Cherry Tomatoes
  - Supersweet 100
  - Sungolds
- Herbs
  - Oregano
  - Sage
  - Rosemary
  - Thyme
  - Chives
  - Basil
  - Cilantro
  - Lovage
- Salad Greens
- Swiss Chard
- Kale
- Collards
- Asian Greens
- Others
  - Scallions
  - Trombocino Squash
  - Suyo-long Cucumbers
  - Hot Wax Peppers
  - Peas

Greens
Shady Spaces

4-5 Hours of Sun

- Cherry Tomatoes
  - Supersweet 100
  - Sungolds

- Herbs
  - Oregano
  - Sage
  - Rosemary
  - Thyme
  - Chives
  - Basil
  - Cilantro
  - Lovage

- Salad Greens
- Swiss Chard
- Kale
- Collards
- Asian Greens

- Others
  - Scallions
  - Trombocino Squash
  - Suyo-long Cucumbers
  - Hot Wax Peppers
  - Pea shoots

- Greens
Shady Spaces

3-4 Hours of Sun

- Osaka Red Mustard
- Baby Lettuce Mix
- Arugula
- Garlic Chives
- Basil

Stick to crops you eat the leaves of.

Plant more to compensate for slow growth.
Shady Spaces

Perennials

**Berries:**
- Blackberries
- Raspberries
- Blueberries
- Gooseberries
- Currants
- Aronia Berries
- Elderberries

**Fruit Trees:**
- Juneberries
- Paw paws
- Figs

**Herbs:**
- Garlic Chives
- Oregano
Shady Spaces

Dense Shade

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Stay in touch!

www.LoveAndCarrots.com
Meredith@LoveAndCarrots.com
Garden@LoveAndCarrots.com