

Some Benefits Of Gardening

According to Rebecca Mass-Krajewski, ARNP, tending to a home garden doesn't only yield vitamin-rich fruits and vegetables, but it's also a great form of low-impact exercise that can positively affect your attitude.

"Gardening is a great way to ensure you're eating the freshest foods, while also tending to your mind and body," Mass-Krajewski says. Spending time digging, planting, weeding, and harvesting from your garden burns calories, builds strength and helps with flexibility. Mass-Krajewski adds that getting outdoors and into the garden disconnects your mind from the hustle and bustle of daily life, which can improve both mental and physical well-being.

Gardening is also a family friendly activity that leaves gardeners of all ages with a sense of accomplishment. Engage kids by involving them in setting goals and tracking progress and enjoy the fruits of your labor together.

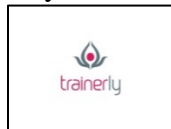
Limited on space? Mass-Krajewski says the best summer plants for beginners are store-bought tomato starters. Even if planted in a large pot, these tomatoes will offer a taste that you just can't get in the stores! She also suggests starting with kale for its long growing season and zucchini because the kids will eat this one, raw or cooked. Here are some other tips for a successful garden:

- Used coffee grounds make a great soil mixer because it adds nutrients like phosphorus, potassium, magnesium, and copper. Collect your own or ask a local coffee shop for theirs.
- Water, water, water! Our region's average rainfall only wets topsoil. Make sure to fully saturate your plants' roots with regular watering.
- Pests after your produce? Broken egg shells will block the path of hungry slugs, and if you drape a net over your strawberries, the birds will stay away.

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