



# 10 Mistakes I Made in My Garden So You Don't Have To

## DESIGN

Good design makes your garden more beautiful and easier to maintain.

1. **Mistake:** No garden design. **Solution:** Create beds and paths.  
Stay away from the flat style of gardening. The most attractive and easiest to maintain gardens have established beds and paths.  
I recommend 3 1/2—4' wide beds and 2'-3' wide paths.
2. **Mistake:** Growing grass in your garden **Solution:** Kill it!  
Grass is always on the move, so it creates a lot more maintenance. Smother it and create barriers between it and your garden.

## PLANNING

Create a simple plan for success.

3. **Mistake:** Growing things that aren't worth it. **Solution:** Understand each vegetable.  
Strategically decide what you're going to grow in your garden. Understand the full picture of each vegetable—how long it takes to get a harvest, how big the plant grows, how long you can harvest from each plant., and in what season you harvest.
4. **Mistake:** Buying plants and seeds from any old place. **Solution:** Follow the farmers.  
What variety you grow does matter. The seeds and plants you buy are one of the keys to your garden's success. When in doubt, follow the farmers. Check out Johnny's Selected Seeds, High Mowing Seeds, and Seeds Savers Exchange.
5. **Mistake:** Losing plant tags. **Solution:** Keep simple records.  
Start a garden binder. The most important thing to put in that binder is a map of your garden. Write what you plant, when you plant it, and how many.

## GARDEN HEALTH

Happy plants = happy gardener.

6. **Mistake:** Not paying attention to your soil **Solution:** Focus on building soil fertility.  
Ways to build fertility: add a balanced organic fertilizer before planting, use mulch, cover crops, manure, and compost yearly on your garden.  
Diversify your inputs to build fertility. Blog post: [CreativeVegetableGardener.com/organic-garden-fertilizer/](http://CreativeVegetableGardener.com/organic-garden-fertilizer/)

7. **Mistake:** Leaving bare soil in your garden. **Solution:** Cover beds and paths with mulch.  
Bare soil will grow weeds, dry out, erode, and blow away. Mulch garden beds with straw, hay, leaves, grass clippings. Mulch paths with woodchips or create a more permanent path with stone, brick, gravel.
8. **Mistake:** Watering too much, or too little! **Solution:** Water just right.  
Newly planted seeds need to be watered every day. Older plants need less water, depending on your soil. Drip irrigation is a good choice for dry climates.

## ENJOYMENT

Your garden should feed you body and your soul.

9. **Mistake:** Not focusing on creating beauty in your garden. **Solution:** Mix flowers with your veggies.  
Annual flowers help elevate your garden from a utilitarian space to one that feeds you on a deeper soul level. See my book, *Smart Start Garden Planner*, for favorite varieties.
10. **Mistake:** Composting extra produce. **Solution:** Focus on easy ways to preserve food.  
Use your basement, fridge, and freezer to quickly preserve excess produce for off season eating. See my book, *Super Easy Food Preserving*, for lots of ideas on quick preserving for off-season eating!

*Happy Gardening!*

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*Ways to join my community:*

1. Sign up for my email list and receive seasonal tips and reminders every Sunday.
2. Build your skills with a how-to video series. Find them here:  
[CreativeVegetableGardener.com/learningcenter](http://CreativeVegetableGardener.com/learningcenter)
3. Join my community over on Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Pinterest.

I hope to get to know you and your garden better this year!