

Gardening 10 Commandments

Every gardener has some commandments that they hold dear and follow. These are my 10 commandments for frugal gardening, as well as for [beginning gardeners](#) who are just getting started:

1. **Thou shalt have fun:** If you aren't having fun while gardening, find another hobby
2. **Thou shalt save money, not spend money:** If you are planting a frugal garden, the bounty you receive should ultimately save you money over the amount you put into the garden
3. **Thou shalt not acquire needy plants:** Nothing makes it into my garden if it has specific needs or is just constantly needy (I sat through a garden club lecture & demo once where the speaker included the word critical more than a half dozen times...nothing goes in my garden that has a word like "critical" attached to it!)
4. **Thou shalt not acquire fleeting plants:** Anything I plant needs to stick with me. In other words, it can't be a fleeting, flash in the garden bed sort of annual. No spot-of-color sort of event in my garden. Plants have to come back again and again; and on their own too!
5. **Thou shalt keep digging to a minimum:** The less digging the better. I'm all for raised beds, container gardening and getting anyone else to do any necessary digging!
6. **Thou shalt be willing to try new things:** I will try anything once. I know, this is a slight contradiction to Commandment #3, but it is my garden & I reserve the right to try anything once. I can always pass it along to someone else if it doesn't behave itself and it may turn out to be something that is perfect for my garden that I can use again and again.

7. Thou shalt not acquire thirsty plants: Besides my veggie garden area, I don't want anything in my garden that will expire if it doesn't get a daily drink of water. Things need to hold their own here as I don't have a drip or irrigation system and I just don't seem to be the kind of gardener that remembers to water everything at exactly the right time. Plants with good root systems will win out every time, over those that are more delicate.

8. Thou shalt favor plants with multiple uses: Plants that do two things, instead of just one, will win a spot in my garden every time. Shrubs that are green all year and flower sometime during the year are great, as are trees that show off early spring blossoms as well as provide shade during the summer. Plants that are interesting in my borders or cottage gardens plus provide veggies for the table are favorites and any plant that has a fragrance is a sure addition.

9. Thou shalt not hide your garden in the back corner: The older I get, the closer my gardens get to the house. When I began gardening, most of my beds were in the back forty; nice because there was lots of room and they could be interesting...or not. No one but me usually saw them. With my move to this current property, my gardens are located right outside my front door. This was initially due to not having any other ground ready to plant plus the proximity to a water faucet.

I will never do the back forty kind of gardening again. This is just way too much fun. Everyone that comes to my house, from family to the UPS driver, has some sort of comment about the gardens. And, since people are always visiting; I'm so much more interested in working to keep the gardens up to snuff!

10. Thou shalt disturb weeds often: My last commandment has to be the advice I received from a great old gardener friend: Disturb the little, almost invisible weed seeds on a regular

basis (read this as daily) and there will be no need to spend hours weeding. So true. The more time I spend just cultivating the dirt in between the plants & rows, the fewer weeds I ever see, the little weed sprouts just get too discouraged to grow.

Grow Plants From Cuttings

One of the best ways to save money when gardening is to not purchase plants for your garden in the first place. There are a number of ways that this can be accomplished. One of the best and easiest ways to do this is to make use of plant cuttings.

Learn to grow plants from cuttings. There are a variety of ways to prepare cuttings depending on the plant so a little study is necessary. Timing is also of great importance to the success of getting the plant cutting to generate on its own. That being said, it's not difficult to accomplish once you know the correct procedure for your type of plant. Spending some time to study the best way to go about using cuttings from the plants you want will help ensure that you have a beautifully full garden.

The best part about cuttings is that there are a large variety of plants that can be grown from them. It also means that you can have a whole new plant for free just by snipping off a piece of an already grown plant. Some easy plants to start with include mint, red valerian, hydrangea, pincushion, geraniums and scented geraniums.

In addition, consider getting cuttings from the food that you buy from the grocery store to eat. Many times you can slice off a small piece of the food and grow an entirely new plant

while still eating the majority of it for your meal.