

Don't Do That! 9 Pieces of Bad Gardening Advice to Ignore



Gardening, an age-old practice that bridges generations, cultures, and geographies, has seen a resurgence in popularity in recent years. With this renewed interest comes an abundance of advice, some of it good, some... not so much. In an era where the internet is teeming with quick tips and hacks, it's crucial to weed out the "bad gardening advice" that can do more harm than good to your green space. Here, we debunk 9 common pieces of misguided counsel and steer you toward practices that will ensure your garden thrives.

1. More Water, Happier Plants



One of the most prevalent pieces of bad gardening advice is the belief that all plants need to be watered frequently. Overwatering can lead to root rot, fungal infections, and a myriad of other issues. It's essential to understand the specific water needs of each plant and adjust your watering schedule accordingly, especially during different seasons.

2. The Miracle of Coffee Grounds



Coffee grounds are often touted as a magic solution for all plants. While they can be beneficial for some acidic-loving plants, using them indiscriminately can alter soil pH and affect plant growth negatively. It's better to rely on a proper soil test and amend your soil based on its specific needs.

3. Bananas for Blooms



Another piece of bad gardening advice is burying banana peels at the base of flower plants for more blooms. While bananas do contain potassium, which is beneficial for plant growth, they won't provide a quick fix for lackluster flowers. A balanced fertilizer tailored to your plant's needs is a more reliable option.

4. Planting by the Moon



Gardening by the lunar cycle is an ancient practice with a romantic allure, steeped in folklore and tradition, but it lacks scientific backing. While the moon's gravitational pull does influence tidal movements, there's no concrete evidence to suggest it has a similar effect on plant growth. Therefore, it's crucial to base planting decisions on tangible, proven factors such as climate conditions, soil readiness, and the specific requirements of each plant rather than adhering to the mystical phases of the moon.

5. Beer for a Lush Lawn



The myth that pouring beer on your lawn will create a lush, green carpet is a waste of good beer. While the sugars in beer might temporarily feed the soil microbes, they won't provide the balanced nutrition your lawn needs. Stick to regular lawn care practices for the best results.

6. Epsom Salts for Everything



Epsom salts are often recommended for a wide range of garden issues, but their benefits are specific and not universally applicable. Generally, you only want to use it if your soil test indicates a magnesium or sulfur deficiency, not as a catch-all solution for a wide variety of issues, as it's not the miracle cure some people claim.

7. Vinegar as a Weed Killer



Vinegar can kill weeds, but it's a non-selective herbicide that can harm your desirable plants, too. Moreover, it doesn't kill weed roots, making it a temporary solution at best. For a more effective approach, focus on cultivating healthy soil that supports the growth of your desired plants over weeds.

8. Tough Love for New Plants



The belief that stressing new plants by limiting water and nutrients will make them “tougher” is misguided. Young plants need adequate care and a nurturing environment to establish themselves. Only once they are established should you consider reducing care to encourage deeper root growth.

9. Gravel in Pots for Better Drainage



Adding a layer of gravel at the bottom of planting pots is a long-standing practice thought to improve drainage. However, this can create a water-saturated layer above the gravel where roots can rot. A better approach is to use a well-draining potting mix and ensure your pots have drainage holes.

Don't Fall for Bad Gardening Advice



In the realm of gardening, where variables like climate, soil, and plant types play significant roles, it's essential to approach advice critically. Bad gardening advice can not only set back your garden's progress but also lead to unnecessary frustration and expense. By staying informed, experimenting cautiously, and observing what works best in your own garden, you can cultivate a thriving green space that brings joy and bounty. Remember, the most fruitful gardening practices are those grounded in understanding the unique needs of your garden ecosystem.

Read More:

[The Poison Garden: 10 Plants You Should Never Put in Your Garden](#)

[12 Low-Maintenance Gardening Tips for The Busy Millennial](#)

5 Common Gardening Myths You Should Forget About



The gardening world is rife with anecdotal information. Since I started gardening over 10 years ago, I've run into my fair share of common gardening myths. People love to make big

claims about their gardening techniques. It turns out, though, that while the “secret sauce” might have some truth to it, it’s usually a lot more complicated. Correlation doesn’t equate to causation, after all. Just because your [fertilizer](#) application led to better growth last year doesn’t mean you’ll achieve the same results the next. Why? Adding fertilizer willy nilly is a bad idea. It can create nutrient imbalances and produce harmful runoff. Which other common gardening myths are hogwash? Let’s take a look.

Coffee Grounds are Great for Your Garden

Don’t listen to people who try to sell you on this common gardening myth. Coffee grounds are best kept for your compost pile. Spent grounds can actually do more harm than good when added to your garden. Why? Because they often contain high amounts of caffeine, they can actually [suppress plant growth](#).

Cedar Wood Chips Are Bad For Your Plants

I avoided cedar wood chips for the longest time because I had read this gardening myth online, and it stuck in my head. Years later, I decided to try it out for myself. It turns out the wood chips had no ill effect on my plants. In fact, adding mulch actually *helped* my plants better conserve water, which improved their growth significantly. According to [OSU Extension Service](#), the poor plant health that people attribute to cedar chips may really be related to other problems entirely.

Epsom Salts Can Improve Plant Growth

Ugh. This is a widespread gardening myth, and it drives me up the wall. Don’t add nutrients to your soil without [testing](#) it! That’s it. That’s the takeaway. Epsom salts are high in magnesium, so if your soil already contains plenty of magnesium, there’s absolutely NO point in tossing Epsom salts into your garden.

Fertilize On a Yearly Basis

Again, fertilizing without understanding the composition of your soil is a big mistake. This is a common gardening myth that often crops up as a piece of gardening wisdom in gardening guides, articles, and more. Fertilizing depends on the plant in question and the soil in which it's growing. Don't apply fertilizer unless you understand WHY you're doing it.

Suffocate Weeds With Mulch

Technically, this is both a gardening myth and a gardening truth. Lots of mulch will suffocate weeds, but too much can also cut off oxygen to your plants' roots. Never add more than 3 inches of mulch. You're better off weeding before adding mulch than trying to kill weeds with an ultra-thick layer of the stuff.

Eggshells Are a Great Source of Calcium

This extremely common gardening myth has some truth to it. Eggs *do* contain calcium! However, barely any will make its way into your garden by way of the shells. Eggshells take an incredibly long time to break down—even when added to a compost pile—so they're pretty useless in the garden. Even so, people still swear by them. Another eggshell myth is that they help deter soft-bodied pests like slugs. Not true. Use diatomaceous earth instead.