

Home & Garden

Little at Large

IF I could earn a pound every time I hear 'I'd love to have a nice garden, but I just don't have the time', I'd be a very rich man.

Yet, there are many ways in which gardens can be kept neat and attractive without spending too much time on them.

With planning, many aspects of your garden can be made much less labour intensive.

First of all, never try to fight against the natural soil conditions of your garden.

If your soil is acid, grow acid-lovers; if alkaline, don't struggle with lime-haters.

If it is naturally damp, only grow moisture-loving plants.

With lawns, use a hard-wearing one, which will require less maintenance and will tolerate drought better.

When it comes to planting, try and do it in the autumn.

It is the best time, as the soil is damp but still warm and temperatures are cooler.

You can cut down on weeding and future watering by mulching around plants.

A 5cm layer of organic matter or other materials like bark or stones will prevent the growth of annual weeds and retain soil moisture.

When you are deciding on plants, shrubs and herbaceous



**Garden talk, by
Simply Garden's
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perennials are much less time consuming than short-lived bedding plants.

Avoid plants notorious for attracting pests and diseases.

If you are planting a hedge, consider how often they need cutting during the growing season.

Yew will keep its shape and require a haircut once a year.

Do not impulse-buy but research carefully. Time invested at this stage will be time saved in the future.

**Happy gardening
Martin Little**