

Garden Planning for Next Year

by Shauna Wanamaker

Garden planning for next year: so I have been asked if I consult on planning gardens a lot. No, I don't because I teach full time. But if you are a person who needs help, here is my suggestion: right now is the time to look and think ahead to what you want. All your current plants should be or would have been a full height, colour, etc.... Take note of their height and size now. Will they need to be split? Are they overgrown? Do they have enough room for next years growth?

Do you like where they are placed? Are they in the right light? Did they do well this year? Did you like it or hate it? What happened when the plant was done blooming? Do you have companion plants that will pick up where they left off and give colour or texture? Are there plants you want to get? How much maintenance and effort do you want to put in?

Once you have taken stock of your current situation, and how much time and effort you want to put in, decide what kind of garden you like? Do you like overgrown, English country gardens? Do you prefer minimal plants? Maybe you like the look of plants not touching. Are you going to stick native plants or are cultivated plants ok. Everyone has different preferences. Know yours!

Now, take paper and draw the garden space you have. If you want to put each plant on a post it so

it's moveable, go for it or use a pencil. Start with the tallest plants. Place them towards the back. Place your other plants around them. Keep spread and height in mind. Maybe code them by bloom time so that you always have something in bloom. Go on to Pinterest and plant sites and find looks that you like. Do you want art or statues or pots? You can do what you want and by starting now, you give yourself all of winter and spring to get your plan in place. Trust me! If you write it out now, you will be ready in the spring when things thaw and you can't remember what was what and where! I keep a plant journal. I sketch it out for my own sanity!!!! I have lots of Photos so I can remember what the plan was!

A garden is like art to me. It's a living design. It's never completely finished. There will always be something to move, snip, add or take out. Give yourself permission to play with it and find out what you like best. Ask lots of questions! There is such a wealth of garden knowledge with our group. Have a plant Guru that is your go to person! There is so much to learn in this plant world!

That's it in a nutshell. If you are overwhelmed, pick one space to work on. Start small. On a tight budget? Swap plants with a friend. Sales are on now for perennials too!

Hope this is helpful!!!!