



## 25 BEST TIPS FROM MASTER GARDENERS!

- 01.) Repel plant-eating pests, flies and mosquitoes by planting basil near tomatoes and in patio or deck containers.  
-Cindy Sharpton, Franklin, TN
- 02.) Include plants that bloom at different times by shopping for them every week or two from spring through fall.  
-Kathy Adams, Commerce Township, MI
- 03.) Check mature plant sizes before you buy to ensure they'll fit (and won't eventually outgrow) their sites.  
-Christine Edie, Cincinnati, OH
- 04.) Add earthworms to planted containers to help break down the soil. Return worms to the garden when you clean pots in fall.  
-Kathy Brehm, Framingham, MA
- 05.) For season-round color, pick perennials with vibrant-hued foliage like colorful-leaved varieties of ajuga, heuchera and sedum.  
-Henry Bissonnette, Woodbury, CT
- 06.) Interplant veggies, fruits and flowers for aesthetic interest and to confuse pests, attract beneficial bugs and improve pollination.  
-Erin Martea, Ithaca, NY
- 07.) Introduce beneficial insects, such as native lady bugs, lace-wings and hoverflies to control unwanted pests.  
-Susan McGreal, McHenry, MD
- 08.) Stop deer in their tracks by including aromatic plants, such as pineapple mint, lemon verbena, fennels, dill, hops, salvia, yarrow and lavender in your perennial and herb borders.  
-Linda Nykaza Albanese, Fairfield, CT
- 09.) Determine if spring soil is dry enough for planting with the "chocolate cake" test. Grab a small handful of soil and squeeze. If it drains water, it's too wet. If it stays together with just a few falling crumbs (like moist cake), it's good for planting.  
-Elaine Ferris, Mason, MI
- 10.) Place to-be-shared plant divisions in doubled-up plastic grocery bags and tie the handles.  
-Conrad Zemens, Macomb Township, MI
- 11.) Prune spring-flowering shrubs and climbing roses right after they finish blooming.  
-Shirley Miller, Broken Arrow, OK
- 12.) Plant gaillardia, which is drought- and salt-tolerant, near roadside mailboxes.  
-Melissa Eldridge, Stanton, MI
- 13.) When you plant a rosebush, place a banana peel in the planting hole; it's good fertilizer.  
-Roberta Beatty, Harrison, AK
- 14.) Try this container combo: Blend firecracker plant, purple and red petunias, and red verbena with dusty miller and trailing bacopa.  
-Jeanine Smetana, Fallston, MD
- 15.) Sort new and empty seed packs (marked with planting dates and locations) in a coupon folder.  
-Susan Pinker-Dodd, St. Louis, MO
- 16.) Set empty seed packs in the tines of yard-sale forks and use as row or plant markers.  
-Karen Ellen Mills, Midland, MI
- 17.) Poke Y-shaped tree branches into soil in front of droopy flowers as natural-looking supports.  
-Dorothy Ando, Sterling Heights, MI
- 18.) Orient rows of vegetable plants on a north-south axis so they receive both morning and afternoon sun.  
-Kathy Lewis, Kerrville, TX
- 19.) Cut lower branches from 2-foot-high tomato plants to discourage soil-related diseases and ease watering.  
-Bonnie Lixey, Mt. Morris, MI
- 20.) Use tarps to transport heavy plants or bulky shrubs and help drag pruned tree branches to the compost bin or curb.  
-Monica Milla, Ann Arbor, MI
- 21.) At season's end, place green tomatoes in a brown paper bag atop the refrigerator; they'll ripen in a few days.  
-Jerri Beebe, Weirton, WV
- 22.) Encourage perennial geraniums to rebloom by cutting plants to the ground in early August. New green growth quickly emerges, followed by flowers in 10 to 14 days.  
-Mary Estes, Palouse, WA
- 23.) Take digital photos of plant groupings that need improving. Make notes on photo printouts to use as guides next spring.  
-Dale Daily, DeWitt, MI
- 24.) Use stones to label your plants. Their weight prevents them from being raked up with the fall leaves.  
-Patty DiVito, Virginia Beach, VA
- 25.) If things don't turn out as you planned, savor the lessons learned, and try something new next time.  
-Kathie Marlow, Fredericksburg, TX