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VERTICAL GARDENING

By Dr. Moon

Vertical gardens are a fantastic gift for Mother's Day if your mom/ wife likes to garden or for any of you who want to garden and have only a small space. Plants will quickly regrow so that you can have a continual source of salad. Walking out the back door and harvesting a fresh salad is a luxury!

If this piques your interest, go to OutlandLiving.com to order a vertical garden (or Amazon)! These vertical gardens come in 4' or 6' in height. You can also plant flowers to add color and interest. These are easy to assemble, and the trays are sturdy plastic, but you must drill holes for drainage. Once completed, add about 1 inch of gravel to the bottom to help drainage. The instructions tell you how much soil you will need for each tray. Use Miracle-Gro Potting Soil and fill the tray to about 1" from the top. Lightly firm the soil so the level will not sink.



As you can see in the photograph, you can plant several types of lettuce: Ruby Leaf, Oak Leaf, Black Leaf, and Butter, as well as Arugula. I also recommend planting mint, sage, and parsley. You can add flowers for fun and color. You can plant from seeds or plants. I planted plants 4 to 6" apart on triangular spacing. The Miracle-Gro Potting Soil has fertilizer in the soil. Continue to fertilize every 2 to 4 weeks with Miracle-Gro Liquid All Purpose Plant Food. Once seeded or planted, gently water the soil with low pressure so you don't blow out the seeds or dislodge the plants. Let plants grow until full and about 6 to 8 inches in height. Once mature, use your scissors to cut back the lettuce leaves to a height of 2 inches. You can harvest fresh lettuce weekly once they are vigorously growing. You can clip the herbs as needed.

Have fun with your vertical gardens. Continue to harvest the lettuce until we get into the heat of summer, when it may die. Convert your vertical garden to other summer vegetables or plant flowers. You can plant lettuce again in the Fall.



Mother's Day Plant Gift Ideas

- Drift Roses (no Knockout varieties due to rose rosette disease)
- Go to Wildseed Farms (www.wildseedfarms.com) and purchase pollinator seeds that can be planted in garden or beds to attract butterflies year round
- ZZ plant (great for indoors)
- Orchids
- Herbs for a small herb garden

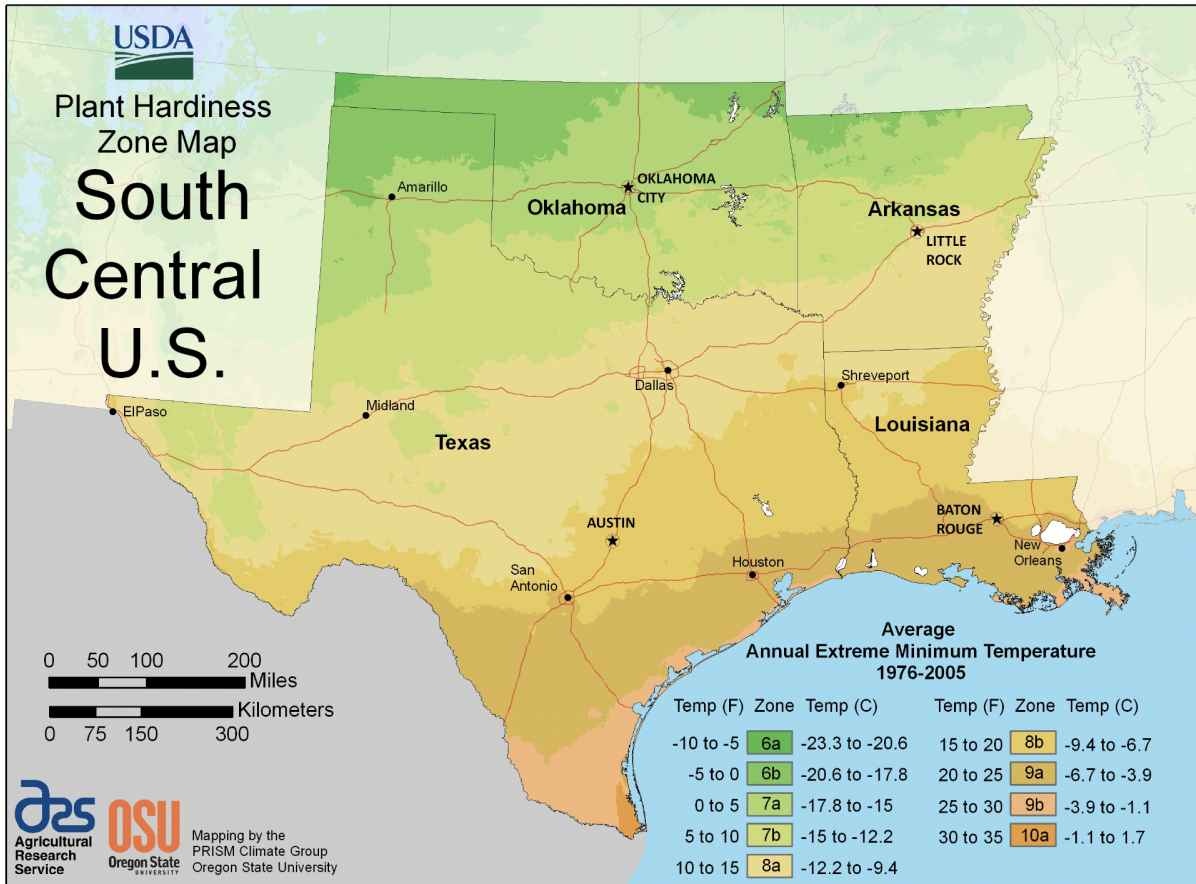
A graphic titled "Mother's Day Plant Gift Ideas" featuring a list of plant suggestions and illustrations of flowers and a butterfly.

TREE TIPS FOR MAY

- **MONITORING YOUR TREES FOR INSECTS & DISEASES:** Control leaf spot or powdery mildew with Neem Oil or any tree fungicide. If your tree has insects, then treat it with BioAdvanced Tree and Shrub. This will systemically treat your tree, and it also feeds your tree. If you prefer an organic control, use Neem Oil. Apply as per label instructions.



- **TREE FERTILIZATION:** Fertilize all trees older than four years once or twice yearly. Young or weak trees need extra fertilizer. Trees planted under three years should be fertilized in February, May, September/October. Tree health and vigor will suffer if they do not get enough fertilizer. Apply $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of a complete turf fertilizer per inch trunk diameter spread evenly from the trunk out past the tree's drip line to encourage root growth out of the root ball.
 - **TREE MULCHING:** Remove the grass from around the tree trunk to 2 feet around the tree and apply mulch to a depth of 2 inches. Use dyed-brown mulch, and once installed, pull the mulch back 6 inches from around the trunks. This helps conserve moisture for your tree, protects the trunk from line trimmer or mower damage, and prevents competition from other plants from taking away fertilizer meant for young trees. Install only 2 inches of mulch. Do not build a mulch volcano around the tree!
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STAY IN THE ZONE: You can increase your gardening success by selecting plants that are compatible with the climate in Texas. Use the Plant Hardiness Zone Map to determine the best plants for your area. Most plants are labeled by their zone number, but you can also google plants to assess their numbers.

GBTM- Frequently Asked Questions

<p>When is the best time to plant a tree in Texas for maximum success?</p>	<p>That would be in October. The tree will have time to grow roots into its surrounding soil and get established before the hot summer weather. After planting, fertilize the tree with BioAdvanced Tree and Shrub product. This product provides systemic insect control and plant food for up to 6-months. Fertilize new trees three times a year in March, May, and September to encourage a vigorous tree.</p>
<p>How do I control plant lice all over my trees and shrubs?</p>	<p>These tiny, soft-bodied, pear-shaped insects are aphids. At this time of year, there can be hundreds present on new growth. Control with Neem Oil.</p>
<p>How often should I water my yard this time of year?</p>	<p>Depending on rain, one time per week.</p>
<p>Why is my Bermudagrass slow to green-up this year?</p>	<p>The low night temperatures have slowed down the green-up. Bermudagrass likes hot weather! It will not start to green-up until there are consistent 70+ night temperatures.</p>
<p>Is it ok to remove dead limbs out of my tree this time of year?</p>	<p>Yes, you can remove dead and broken limbs out of the tree as soon as you see them. These attract insect and disease if not removed. Make all cuts with pruning loppers or a razor saw. Cut-back to a lateral branch when possible and make the cut on the trunk, a branch collar, or where the bark is rolling.</p>
<p>Can I still apply a pre-emergent weed control to my beds and turf to my established yard?</p>	<p>Yes, you can apply Preen or Halts to your yard to prevent summer weeds now. Next year, apply pre-emergent weed control in February, May, and September to prevent most all weeds in your yard for the year. Pre-emergent will not control established weeds like crabgrass. You will need to apply a post-emergent for southern lawns for this control. Follow all label instructions for applications.</p>
<p>What is the best annual color to plant for summer?</p>	<p>Plant Cora Vinca— it can be planted now, and it comes in many solid and mixed colors. It loves the heat! PRO TIP: Be careful not to overwater color. This is one of the biggest contributors we see for diseased and dead color.</p>

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