

A Miscellany of
**Garden
Wisdom**

A hybrid of classic and contemporary
tips for the budding gardener



Isobel Carlson

A MISCELLANY OF GARDEN WISDOM

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Introduction

Whether you're an unseasoned gardener or your knowledge is already ripe, this collection of classic and contemporary tips will be a source of inspiration.

Overflowing with practical advice on coping with every aspect of gardening, as well as more unusual tips such as microwaving daffodil bulbs and watering your house plants with coffee, this book also contains snippets of fascinating garden folklore and unique planning techniques.

Our garden wisdom is handily divided into easy to use sections, to make sure that you and your garden reach your most blissful potential.

The journey to becoming a gardening guru will not be easy. But with a little assistance and a sprinkle of garden magic, you can battle the bugs and the slugs, and plant, prune and dig your way to your very own paradise.

Read on to follow the (garden) path to green-fingered enlightenment...

Planning Your Paradise

*'The garden must first be prepared in
the soul or else it will not flourish.'*

English proverb

WHEN IT COMES to planning a garden, size really does matter! Don't design a garden that is too big for your plot. Bigger is not necessarily better – just remember that everything should fit into the space easily and naturally.



BEFORE PLANNING YOUR garden it is important to work out what direction your garden faces, as the amount of sunlight that it receives can affect the layout and types of plants that you can grow. You should also make a note of the areas that get a lot of sunlight and those that get more shade.

ARRANGE YOUR PLANTS according to their watering requirements to save you valuable time in the future.



WHEN PLANTING, TAKE into account a plant's size at maturity. Layer by height and bloom time for emphasis and constant colour.



MAKE A SMALL garden feel larger by putting bright, attention-grabbing colours at the front of a border and cooler colours at the back.

If your garden is dark and shady, bring in light by painting your fences white and using reflective surfaces to make the most of any sunlight.



WHEN LAYING OUT paths in small gardens, create an illusion of space by narrowing the walkway as it continues down the garden from the house. Make the end of the path about a foot narrower than the start of the path and watch your guests marvel!

Garden Lore...

Yellow flowers in the garden will protect the whole family from witches.



Sorting your Yin from your Yang

*'How fair is a garden amid the trials
and passions of existence.'*

Benjamin Disraeli

WHEN DESIGNING YOUR garden, bear in mind the three basic concepts of Feng Shui:

Energy flow is a very important factor.

Wavy or curvy lines are beneficial.

Straight lines are negative.

Sorting your Yin from your Yang

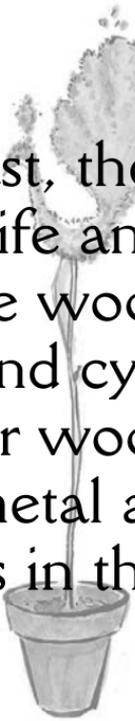
AIM FOR AN equal balance of yin (dark, soft, passive) and yang (light, hard, active).



THERE ARE GENERATIVE and destructive relationships between the five elements: wood, fire, earth, metal and water.



NORTH IS THE direction of personal growth and creativity. Use water elements such as ponds and fountains in the north of your garden, but avoid stone, clay and earth here.



In the east, the direction
of new life and growth,
incorporate wood elements:
columns and cylinders such
as trees or wooden posts.
Avoid metal and white
flowers in this space.

THE NORTH-EAST IS the direction of wisdom and nature, so use aspects of the earth element here. Keep surfaces low and flat and include stone benches, paving stones and rock gardens.



YOU SHOULD ALSO use wood elements in the south-east, which is the direction of wealth and communication. This is a good area to cultivate and display plants and flowers for shows.

THE SOUTH IS the direction of dreams, aspirations and happiness, and is represented by the fire element. Incorporate pointed and triangular shapes here, and barbecues or lights. Avoid water elements.



IN THE SOUTH-WEST, the area of marriage, romance and motherhood, include low flat surfaces and the earth element.



THE WEST, THE direction of children, creativity and entertainment, is represented by the metal element. Design your garden to incorporate an area for outdoor entertaining here, using circles and arches.

THE NORTH-WEST IS also represented by the metal element and indicates trade, travel, and interests away from home. This is a good area for statues, animals and wind chimes. Avoid barbecues and red flowers here.

Garden Lore...

Plant rowan or mountain ash
outside homes and barns to protect
those within from evil curses.



Tools of the Trade

*'He that would perfect his work
must first sharpen his tools.'*

Confucius

WHEN BUYING TOOLS, be sure to handle them first to check that they feel comfortable and aren't too heavy for you.



KEEP YOUR TOOLS rust free and good as new by keeping an old oily rag in the garden shed and wiping them after each use.



DIG OUT YOUR laddered old stockings or tights and hang them in a cool dry place – they're great for storing bulbs or onions!

INSTEAD OF BUYING expensive bamboo canes, grow your own! They look lovely in a garden, and can be harvested in the autumn and dried in a cool place. Grow them in pots or in your garden, but remember to keep them well watered and drained.



MAKE YOUR GARDENING gloves last longer: when one glove wears out, wash the spare one and turn it inside out. It's then ready to be part of a new pair of gloves.

Don't throw your old potato peeler away; it's a handy gadget for removing weeds.

