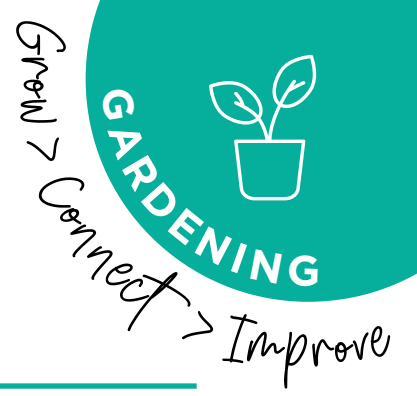




Week Eighteen



Herbs

No matter the size of your garden you can always grow herbs. They can be grown in pots on balconies or in the garden along with other plants. Pots of herbs can look very attractive with their different colours and textures. Herbs lend themselves very well to being grown in pots. Not too tall and a variety growing in the one pot looks very attractive.

How lovely to be able to pick some fresh herbs to enhance the latest creation from your kitchen.

Plant aromatic herbs amongst cabbages and other brassicas to discourage the white cabbage butterfly. Mint is one that grows well beside cabbage, but it is best grown in a pot because mint tends to take over the garden.

We all enjoy a sprig of rosemary with our roast lamb and that is another herb that grows well beside cabbage and also beside carrots. Basil grows well beside tomatoes and capsicum. However, the very versatile parsley does not like being beside mint.

For beginners, start by planting seedlings in a pot, rather than seeds – you will have success more quickly. All plants need light, but the amount varies - basil and rosemary require full sunlight, while mint only requires partial sunlight. You may need to experiment with where you position your pots to give them the appropriate amount of light.

More pot plants die from over-watering than from under-watering. Check the moisture level in the soil, and only water when needed.

Good drainage is essential: make sure your pots have drainage holes, and use good quality potting mix which will allow the water to reach the roots, and to drain away if there is an excess. Think about where the excess water will go when it drains out the bottom of your pot: if your pot is indoors or on a veranda or balcony, you do not want it to stain the floor! Nor do your herbs want to sit in a saucer of water, becoming waterlogged. You can put pebbles or ceramic chocks under your pot to lift its base above the level of any water draining from your pot, making sure they do not block the drainage holes. Alternatively, simply check your pot a few minutes after you have finished watering, and empty away any excess water from the pot saucer.

