

HOW GREEN IS YOUR GARDEN?

Sustainable Gardening is all about gardening in a way that minimizes the impact our gardening practices have on the natural environment.

This information sheet has been designed to enable you to conduct a sustainability audit on your garden. Simply tick a box if it is something you are doing in your garden and add up your total at the end. You can continue making your garden more sustainable by aiming for more ticks in six months and 12 months.

If you require more information about an issue refer to one of the Sustainable Gardening booklets on the SGA website. www.sgaonline.org.au



Give yourself a tick if you do any of the following:

Garden Design – do you?

- Have a plan of sun/shade, slope and soil variation in your garden
- Have a rough planting plan that groups plants according to their needs
- Have less than 50% of your garden area taken up by lawn
- Have designed your garden to be a place for people to socialise.

Design Score /4

Compost – do you?

- Make your own compost
- Can list 10 things you can put in compost and three things you shouldn't put in compost
- Use your compost as a fertiliser in your garden.

Design Score /3



Soil – do you?

- You know which are the best types of mulch for different types of plants
- Check mulch levels and replace every year to bring back to 8-10cm deep
- Regularly add organic matter to your soil
- You have at least 3 worms in a spadeful of soil wherever you dig in the garden
- Only dig your soil when you have to.

Design Score /5

Chemicals – do you?

- Avoid using chemicals before it rains or on windy days
- Check your garden regularly for pest outbreaks
- Know exactly what pest or disease you are trying to control
- Use chemicals that have a low toxic level (Refer to the SGA Low Environmental Damage Chemicals)
- Use chemical alternatives (eg garlic sprays) or if you do spray, you target-spray only the affected plant/s
- Use organic fertilisers (compost, manure, seaweed and fish emulsions)
- Don't over fertilise your plants producing excessive plant growth and excess green waste from additional pruning.

Design Score /7

Water – do you?

- Mulch all garden beds and pots
- Have 50% or more of your garden planted with local plants or drought tolerant plants
- Don't have a lawn, or if you do, you cut your lawn long (8-10cm) over summer
- Water in the cool of the day
- Water around the plant root zone with long infrequent watering
- Use a soaker hose or dripper system under the mulch instead of sprays
- Have either a timer on your taps or shut off valves on your hoses
- Have at least 3000litres of water in a tank for summer watering
- Recycle greywater from the laundry and bathroom to the garden using EPA approved techniques or systems.

Design Score /9

Produce – do you?

- Grow any herbs, fruit or vegetable
- Use organic fertilisers and no artificial weed or pest killers.

Design Score /2

Plant selection – do you?

- Know the difference between native, indigenous and exotic plants
- Have more than 30% of your garden planted with local plants
- Have not planted any environmental weeds
- Have at least one shade tree of suitable size for your garden
- Have made a planting plan for a new or established garden to suit drought conditions
- Have grouped your plants according to their water, sun and nutrient needs.

Design Score /6

Products – do you?

- Ask where a product comes from
- Use recycled products, like bricks, timbers, plastic sleepers
- Take your own plastic bag or canvas bag to a garden centre to carry home products and plants
- Reuse your plastic plant pots or put them in a garden center pot recycling bin.

Design Score /4



Sustainable Gardening Score Card

Now	/40
6 Months	/40
12 Months	/40

