



Gardening for everyone

Getting your green thumb on can have a surprising number of health benefits for you and your family. Gardening can be modified to suit people of all ages and abilities.



Garden design

Consider adapting your garden design to make it accessible, productive and pleasant

- Raised garden beds, vertical gardens, pots or urns can prevent stooping or bending.
- Minimise the size and number of high maintenance garden beds and plants.
- Weeding can be reduced with ground covers, or thickly planted perennials, and by mulching.
- Paved or hard surfaces can be an attractive alternative to lawn areas.

- Terracing steep slopes to create flat areas can make gardening and mowing easier.
- Automatic watering systems eliminate the effort required for hand-hosing and can improve water-use efficiency.
- Have an equipment storage area or shed nearby.
- Plan plenty of seats around the garden to save your energy and have some shady areas to sit on hot days.



Kneelers, stools and seats

Garden kneelers, with handles at the sides, help you to kneel and stand up. Many kneelers can be turned upside down to form a low stool. Low stools are useful whilst doing gardening tasks in low beds, particularly if kneeling is difficult or painful.



Hand tools

Appropriate hand tools are easier to use and help maintain good posture. Lightweight tools are easier and less tiring to use.

Look for mechanisms that reduce the operating force required e.g. ratchet mechanisms on secateurs.

Small, sharp tools are often easier to lift and manipulate.

Some tools can be adapted for left-handed users and other adapted for one-handed use with hook-an-loop tape.



Long handled tools

Long handled tools eliminate the need to bend, and reach, and can be used when standing, or seated. They provide greater reach and require less physical effort. Some tools allow the handle length to be altered to suit individual users and the tool head to be changed between different styles of handles.



Grips and angles

Garden equipment can be adapted in many ways to suit your needs. Angled tools can relieve strain on the wrist.

- Larger handles or use of foam padding to increase the handle size
- External handles to change the direction of control
- Use gloves that have a sticky surface or grip texture



Digging and planting

Digging is hard work and can put a strain on your arms or back

- Lightweight spades and shovels may assist to reduce fatigue
- Long handled items or raised beds can assist as you can reduce your bending.
- Power tool attachments may make digging quicker and easier



Lifting, carrying and moving

Almost every job in the garden requires lifting, carrying, and moving things.

- Carry small loads. Don't pile them up
- Use a wheelbarrow, tool belt or bucket with a handle to carry or move tools
- Heavy objects or pots can be moved with a low trolley or hand trolley
- Remember to carry things close to your body and use good lifting principles

Energy conservation tips

Stay fit and active in the garden, but don't overdo it!

Whatever your favourite gardening activities, maintain your ability by using some energy saving techniques:

- Take some time to get ready and plan your task(s)
- Don't forget to warm up your muscles and stretch first.
- Can you sit down or work at a table to complete some tasks
- Use an automatic watering system on a timer
- Improve your garden design and access
- Don't lift heavy items
- Use pots on wheels or trolleys.
- Use raised beds, vertical gardens or pots on tables to reduce bending
- Find the right tool for the job
- Take frequent breaks and warm or cold drinks depending on the weather
- Garden in the cooler part of the day
- Don't forget to Slip, Slop, Slap with the sun protection



More information

For further information, or advice, about any item contained in this information sheet, please contact Independent Living Centre Tasmania Inc.(ILCT):

- Call 1300 452 827 to speak to a health professional.
- Visit our website www.ilct.com.au or email info@ilct.com.au.
- ILCT visits communities around Tasmania. Contact ILCT to find out when we will be in your area.

ILCT provides Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Pathology, and Allied Health Assistant services, on a fee-for-service basis. Our team delivers comprehensive assessments and support that may include assistive technology, home modifications, communication aids, and other tailored interventions to enhance independence and quality of life.

ILCT specifically provides supports to those aged over 18, who are Tasmanian residents and are of any culturally-diverse background. ILCT are a registered provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

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