

Create a small garden big on style and function

When it comes to small gardens, every plant, path and patio matters.

"Everything has to function well, fit well and flow well," said Eileen Obermiller, a landscape architect and Oregon State University Extension Service master gardener. "Small gardens can be a less-is-more situation. But that doesn't mean you can't have it richly textured."

"Lots of texture can be wonderful, but you must keep it as orderly and tidy as you can."

The place to start, as with any garden, is a site assessment, said Obermiller, who has designed gardens as small as 600-square feet or the size of a two-car driveway. Monitor the landscape to find where the sun hits and where the shade falls. Check for windy areas and wet ones. How much rain is there and where does it drain? Are there views that need screening or ones you want to enjoy? Make sure to note where the overhead lines are located. These observations will help determine where to place hardscape and plants.

Once you've got that done, consider how you'll use the space and the elements you want to include. Keep in mind that even large gardens have small spaces within them — side yards, entrances, patios and courtyards. Treat those areas the same way as you do overall small gardens, said Obermiller, who owns Dappled Earth — designs to nurture life! in Powell Butte.



KYM POKORNY
Your Garden

She has the following advice:

Priorities: If you want a table for eight and a fountain, you might instinctively think about a smaller table. But if entertaining is an important part of your lifestyle, keep the table at the size you need and put in a wall fountain that takes up less space. "Where you decide to downsize is important," she said.

Size: Pay attention to the mature height and width of plants. "One of the biggest mistakes people make in small — and large — gardens is to plant something that will be too big. Then they try to hedge it or prune it," she said. "They're constantly fighting it."

Plants: Don't eschew plants with large foliage. Though a little can go a long way, plants like bear's breeches (*Acanthus mollis*), native umbrella plant (*Darmera peltata*), Japanese aralia (*Fatsia japonica*) and cardoon (*Cynara cardunculus*) are good candidates placed in the back of a bed. If you're looking for a tropical feel, mingle the huge leaves of hardy banana with the fine texture of a hardy palm. All add drama and stature but don't take over if used judiciously.

Size is not all to consider,



<https://flic.kr/p/92whPo>

No matter how small your space, you can garden in it.

though. Add in some brightly colored foliage and flowers so the garden doesn't blend into a mass of green. Put them up close and personal in order to enjoy them the most. Stick to one color palette — shades of purple and yellow for example — to keep the garden from looking too busy. Also, don't play "onesies." Repeat plants to keep the garden from looking busy.

Paths: No matter how small the garden, pathways add structure and circulation. Though you'll be tempted to make them small, Obermiller said to keep main paths six feet wide or it will be uncomfortable to navigate.

Hardscape and structures: As with paths, don't miniaturize them. It's better to build fewer structures than to make them too small to be used comfortably. There's usually more

activity swirling around outside than inside, so leave enough space around table and chairs for kids and dogs to get around tables and people to be able to push back their chairs and gab.

Storage: Build in storage for tools, cushions, lighting, garden art and hoses. Benches and ottomans with storage can hold tools, gloves, candles and cushions. Shelves can also store plenty. Starting plantings four feet away from the house gives space to hide things like buckets, hoses and little garden carts. "It's heavy on function," Obermiller said.

Garden up: Trellises, walls and window boxes offer more avenues for plants.

Perspective: Create a focal point. Long, straight lines that taper slightly inward to the end will trick you into thinking the space is larger than it really is.

MI TOWN

Is it time to take a break from all the outdoor — and even indoor — work and activities? The Master Gardener spring sale at the fairgrounds last Friday and Saturday was a very busy one, and those of us who love our vegetables fresh from the backyard were pleased with their offerings. Now we need to tend the garden carefully until the new plants have settled in and are established. It's a lot of work up front, but the rewards will come later in the summer when fresh peas and green beans and those wonderful tomatoes are ready to be picked.

Those of us who attended Dr. Gary Huxford's classes about our United States Constitution — where we learned how to separate myth and folklore from the facts — are in for yet another series of interesting and



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Columnist

informative classes (10 weeks), on Wednesday mornings at 10 a.m. at the Monmouth Senior Center. A retired professor from Western Oregon University, Huxford will focus on the age of European supremacy (1870-1945). For any questions or if you would like more information, please call 503-838-5678.

Both Independence and Monmouth police departments are focusing on public safety with extra patrols which will increase the emphasis on pedestrian safety and impaired motorists. The warmer

springtime weather and long, sunny evenings mean there are many more people — of all ages — walking, bicycling and driving around town. We learned many years ago in Driver Education classes to watch out for each other, and that the pedestrian always has the right of way. Reality tells us that car versus pedestrian isn't pretty — and when you're walking or riding a bike, it's much safer to watch traffic before crossing that street, no matter what the law says.

Those bright red octagon signs on street corners indicate that vehicles should come to a full stop, not just slow down and cruise through the intersection if nobody is nearby. Those of us who walk around our communities on a daily basis are more than familiar with drivers who are glued

to their phones instead of watching the road. Unless you're a physician heading for a hospital emergency, the phone call can keep until you reach a safe place to pull over.

The results are in for the Special District election with positions on school boards, cemetery districts, and a bond issue for Polk County and Southwestern Polk Rural Fire Protection District. Congratulations to all who stepped up to become more involved with their communities.

A belated Happy Mother's Day to everyone. Whether families celebrated with fancy brunches, family dinners, flowers, or offers to clean the house and give Mom the day off, it's always just wonderful to be acknowledged on this special day.

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Friday - Wednesday • May 19 - 24

KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD (Digital) (PG13)	(1:25 4:15)	7:05	9:55
★ GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY 2 (Digital) (PG13)	(12:30 3:30)	6:30	9:30
★ GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY 2 (Digital) (PG13)	(1:00 4:00)	7:00	10:00
DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL (Digital) (PG)	(12:25 2:40 4:55)	7:10	9:25
DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL (Digital) (PG)	(12:00 2:15 4:30)		
ALIEN: COVENANT (Digital) (R)	(1:35 4:25)	6:45	9:35
ALIEN: COVENANT (Digital) (R)		7:15	10:05
SNATCHED (Digital) (R)	(12:40 2:55 5:10)	7:25	9:40
EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING (PG13)	(12:20 2:40 5:00)	7:20	9:40

★ Starred Attraction. No passes Fri-Sun.

Thursday • May 25

KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD (Digital) (PG13)	(1:25 4:15)	7:05	9:55
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY 2 (Digital) (PG13)	(12:30 3:30)	6:30	9:30
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY 2 (Digital) (PG13)	(1:00 4:00)		
DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL (Digital) (PG)	(12:25 2:40 4:55)	7:10	9:25
* PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES (Digital) (PG13)		7:00	9:55
ALIEN: COVENANT (Digital) (R)	(1:35 4:25)	7:15	10:05
BAYWATCH (Digital) (R)	(1:30 4:10)	6:50	9:30
SNATCHED (Digital) (R)	(12:40 2:55 5:10)	7:25	9:40
EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING (PG13)	(12:20 2:40 5:00)	7:20	9:40

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