

# Ten Steps to a New Garden

## 1. Understand your yard

Describe outdoor conditions, including climate, sun, soil, water, existing plants, etc. How do these garden conditions change throughout the year?

## 2. Think about dreams and realities

What do you want? How do you use outdoor space and how would you like to use it? How much time/energy do you have to put into gardening? Can you afford - and do you want - to hire help?

## 3. Make a plan

Start with a general bubble plan that lays out uses, conditions, patterns. Follow up with a more specific plan with accurate dimensions. After selecting plants, draw them in the plan with mature size marked. This will allow you to purchase and plant the correct number of plants with the correct spacing.

## 4. Select plants

Create a plant list based upon garden conditions, proper plant size and shape, and aesthetics. Try to limit the number of different plants, using just enough to create an interesting garden.

## 5. Prepare the garden

[Remove lawn](#), put in paths, garden borders, irrigation, and other hardscape. Native plants do best with no soil amendments and little soil disturbance.

## 6. Shop for plants

[Select healthy plants](#) that are neither too large, nor too small for their containers. Check to make sure leaves and stems are free of pests, undamaged, and healthy looking. Avoid plants with large roots extending from bottom of pot. Make sure that the soil smells fresh with no odor of rotting.

## 7. Put them in the ground

The best time of year to [plant](#) is late fall to winter. Avoid planting when extreme heat is predicted, and in soggy soil. Water containers before planting so the plants are fully hydrated. Hole should be

## Weeding Wild Suburbia

All About Gardening with California Native Plants

<http://www.weedingwildsuburbia.com>

---

same depth as rootball so crown is not buried; it can be slightly above soil level. Fill hole with surrounding soil and gently but firmly pack it down. Water plant thoroughly, have a cool drink, and water it again.

### 8. Establish new plants

Until the roots of new plants have extending into the surrounding soil, check frequently to make sure they are not drought-stressed. As they mature they will require less frequent [watering](#). If a plant dries out often, check the soil of the rootball to make sure that no air pockets. Add soil and press gently but firmly to fill in any such holes.

### 9. Care for the garden

All gardens, including those with native plants, require care to look their best. Observe your plants to best understand what they need. Remember that even mature gardens will require supplemental [water](#) during dry winters.



## **10. Enjoy your successes, learn from your mistakes**

© Barbara Eisenstein, 2013