

Real Estate

GREEN HOUSE

Small gardens can make a big statement

CS BEWLI

Low-maintenance garden is an option for those who are unable to employ a full-time gardener and also have less time to take care of their plants. Such a garden, if planned carefully, can give the effect of an extension of interior designing to the space outside the living area in which plants are used creatively to match or contrast the overall décor effect. Even if the area of the garden is very small, it can be transformed into a beautiful de-stressing garden.

Small beds along the lawn can be used for planting annuals. However, raised flower beds made with contrasting concrete, brick, stone or metal maximise space and go well with annuals. By creating different levels the garden will appear bigger.



For a real low-maintenance garden, no place should be left open as open spaces invite the growth of weeds. The open spaces can be decorated by 'hardscaping' which brings an element of elegance, class and uniqueness to any landscape. Alternatively, depending upon the time available low-lying ground cover of buddelia, chlorophytum, alternanthera, cuphea and sedum gives a good look.

For those who neither have enough space nor time to give to a lawn, container gardening is a rewarding option; a unique container garden can be created by planting flowering perennials and annuals. Light-weight fibreglass or plastic designer containers about 18-22 cm in depth are ideal for annuals, while those with 25-30 cm depth are good for perennials of reasonable size. The containers should have holes at the base. A majority of the annuals are suitable container plants and can reward you with enviable vibrant flowers. In addition to these hanging baskets can also be made to utilise vertical space, and dish gardens that last for a few years and needing less maintenance can be created.

Gravel and pebbles are the latest versatile tools to create a distinctive feature which gives an ornamental touch to any garden. These are used for creating pathways and as ground cover in geometric or designer forms in the garden. Colourful glass pebbles can also be used as a ground cover, but when used in flowing water, they give a different

and an eye-catching look. To avoid weeds growing through the gravel or pebbles, a plastic sheet should be placed underneath to make this low-maintenance.

If space permits, a small seating arrangement or a swing should be arranged to add comfort in enjoying the features created in the garden, but care should be taken to ensure privacy by also planting some tall flowering shrubs.

The boundary wall should be covered with flowering climbers such as begonia, quiscalis, heliotropium and bush rose instead of hedges to give additional space to add grace to the garden by allowing these to grow vertically. Alternatively, for hedge lovers, hedge of perennial and evergreen Clerodendrum enerve is an ideal choice.

Low maintenance plants

- Perennial evergreen beauties of flowering Ixoras, peperomias, chandni, and hibiscus do well; avoid growing fast spreading perennials.
- Evergreen foliage species of Ficus benjamina, panda, and nuda.
- Deciduous dwarf cultivars of Plumeria and dwarf Lagerstroemia indica attract the onlooker with their stunning cluster of long lasting flowers in different hues.
- Popular hybrids of poinsettias and mussaenda bearing long lasting flowers come in different colours. Mussaenda bears colourful bracts during summers and poinsettia adds colour to the garden throughout winter. By placing these plants in the corner or at the backdrop of a wall, garden can be kept colourful throughout the year.