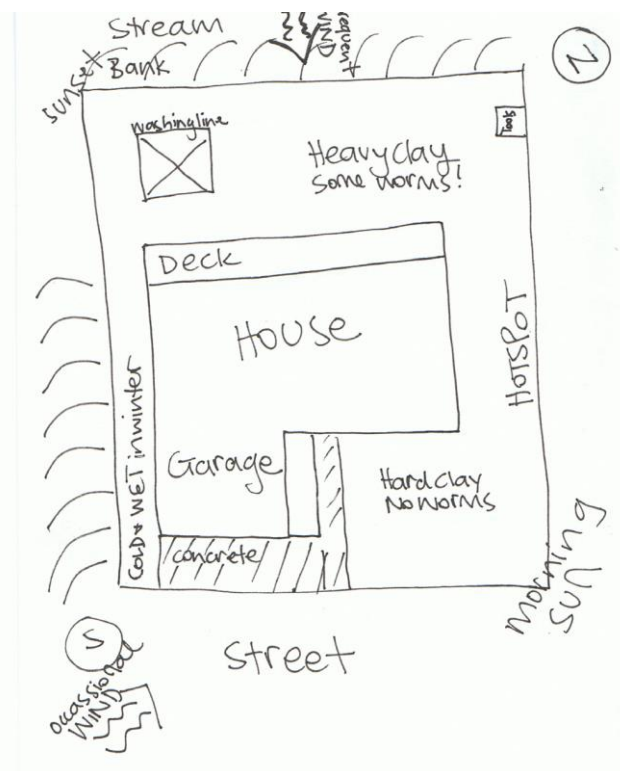


Create your own fruit bowl

Courtesy of the Green Gardener

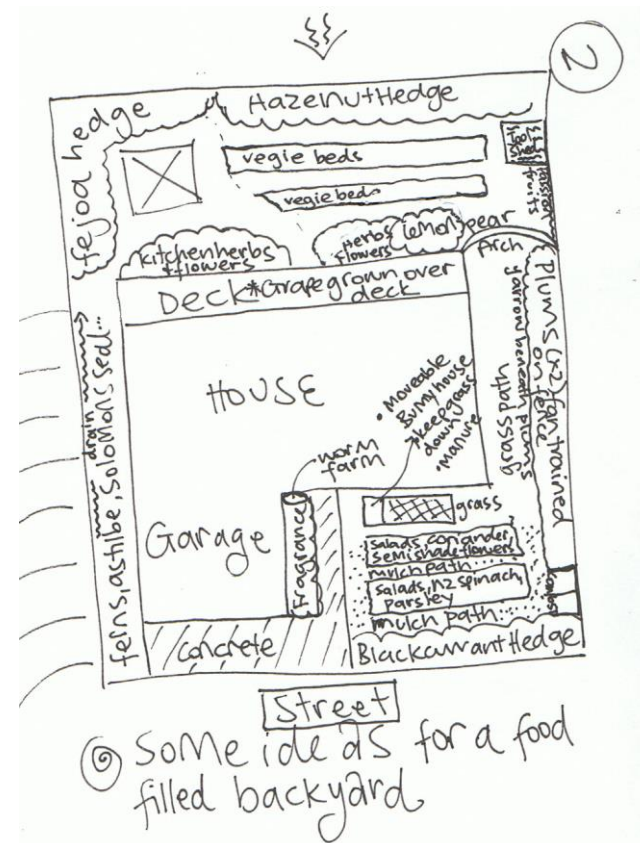
The ideal time for planting fruit trees is mid winter when the trees are dormant. However, it is always a good time to do some planning!



So you want to grow your own fruit?

Here is how....

1. **Make a wish-list** of the fruit you want to grow.
2. **Do a rough sketch of your place** – mark in as much information as you can – north, prevailing winds, frost spots, soil variances, wet spots, shady spots, hot spots..... This is a great opportunity to get to really understand your property. This information is essential for making wise design decisions. For more advice on site analysis, go to www.bestgardening.com, key word search **design basics 101**.
3. **Do some research** – find out all you can about the fruit you want to grow. The back page provides some basic information for you to consider or to take along to your garden centre.
4. **Get a clever friend over** – two heads are better than one! (Why not get some friends together and book a free neighbourhood visit with me?)
5. **Some helpful ideas:** Grow your fruit trees around the edges of your veggie gardens; train fruit trees/or vines over archways, balustrades or fences; use the area beneath your fruit trees to grow herbs, companion flowers and compost activators.
6. **Draw in your fruit trees** (make sure you allow for two trees when pollination is required eg: pears and apples)
7. **Check out your local fruit tree specialists** and order your fruit trees.
Explore catalogues with heritage varieties – for resilient trees suited to organic systems. If they have sold out of the one you want pre order for next year (its worth the wait!)



© Some ideas for a food filled backyard

Which fruit tree goes where?

Courtesy of the Green Gardener

One of the keys to success with fruit trees is to grow them in the right spot. Each type of fruit tree has specific requirements that need to be met.

If you meet all these needs your tree will reward you with loads of fruit!

Here's a list of smaller fruit trees suited to urban sections. This information will enable you to wisely choose which fruit tree should go where. The number in brackets, such as (2.5m) is how high the tree will grow.

NB: dwarf rootstocks are very shallow rooting, vulnerable trees – perfect for espalier, but as a field tree they need a permanent stake, must be out of the wind, and they require permanent irrigation (a good use for your greywater!) The alternative is to use a slightly larger, more robust rootstock and keep the tree in check with good pruning.

Apples

Tolerate – some wind

Need – some winter chilling, well drained soil, wind shelter, protection from heavy frosts

Rootstocks – a dwarf rootstock like M9 (2.5m), or a medium rootstock like MM102 (3-4m) or MM106 (3.5-4.5m)

Pollinator - yes

Pears

Tolerate - cold winters, heavy soils, some wind, some drought, some waterlogging

Need - good moisture and a sunny position.

Don't grow them where spring frost lies – this can damage their flowers.

Rootstocks – quince (2.5-3m) or dwarf rootstock (2.5-3m).

Pollinator – yes

Apricot

Tolerate – a wide range of soils (depending on the rootstock)

Need – winter chilling (although some varieties are suited to milder winters), a sunny spot, protection from spring frosts, good moist soils

Rootstocks – peach rootstock (4m) to suit lighter soils, or plum 'myrobalan' (3-4m) to suit heavier soils.

Pollinator – self fertile but will do better with a pollinator

Peaches

Tolerate – wind, some drought

Need – well drained soil, protection from late spring frosts, lots of sun, some winter chilling

Rootstocks – grown on peach rootstock (4m trees) and suits lighter soils. To fit into a smaller garden you can train your peach as an espalier or cordon.

Pollinator – no

Plums

Tolerate – some wind, heavy soils, some water logging

Need – some winter chilling, protected from frost at flowering time (September), fertile moisture retentive soil

Rootstocks – Choose Myrobalan for heavy clay soils (4m); Marianna rootstocks (a more compact plum) for good loam (3-4 m); or Peach for light/ sandy soils (4m)

Pollinator – yes

To best fit plums into a small garden consider fan training against a wall.

Citrus

Wont tolerate – water logging, drying out, strong wind

Needs – hot sunny spot, good drainage, good soil moisture, regular feeding, frost protection

Rootstocks – trifoliata or flying dragon (3-4m)

Pollinator – no

Feijoas

Tolerate – wind (can grow as a hedge), some cold

Need – good drainage, good soil moisture

Pollinator – yes (except for unique which is self fertile)

When you plan where your feijoas remember they are a dense evergreen - be careful not to shade out other plants.

Mediterranean fruits - olive, grape, fig

Tolerate – poorer soils, wind, some salt wind

Need – heat (use reflected heats from walls and buildings), good drainage, irrigation (until they are established), soils low in nitrogen

Pollinator - Figs and grapes are self fertile;

Olives need a pollinator

Almonds

Tolerate - some wind

Need – free drainage, protection from spring frosts, shelter from the cold southern draught, warm, dry summers

Rootstocks – dwarf rootstock, or peach rootstocks. Can be espaliered to maximise space.

Pollinator – mostly yes; some are self fertile

Hazelnuts

Tolerate – wind (can be used as a hedge), many soil types but not waterlogged.

Need – good drainage, cool climate, fertile soil

Pollinator – yes