

SMALL POPPY NEIGHBOURHOOD GRANTS

Tips for starting a herb garden in your street.



LOCAL PEOPLE + GOOD IDEAS + ACTION = A BETTER NEIGHBOURHOOD

Anyone can grow herbs and the unused area beneath your street trees is a perfect place to have a communal street herb garden.

Step 1: Talk to your neighbours

- Getting your whole street involved will ensure that this project is successful and stays healthy. Talk to your neighbours when you see them in the street. Get their feedback on what they think. Create a flyer about the idea and do a leaflet drop in the street, getting people to respond via email or phone. Create a meeting time in the street for everyone to get together and talk about the idea.

Step 2: Choose hardy tough herbs

- Because these herbs have to survive under street trees and with a fair amount of traffic all around them, you need to choose herbs of the hardy tough variety that need little water and are perennial, i.e. plants that self seed and grow for more than one season. Ideal herbs for a street garden would be :
 - Mints of various types, Oregano, Rosemary, Thyme, Parsley and Sage.
 - Native plants and herbs may also be a good choice as they grow in the wild without any human attention. Ensure that you check with local nurseries and the Botanical Gardens to ensure that you do not plant any environmental weeds. The Royal Botanical Gardens website has a lot of useful information on environmental weeds at www.rbg.vic.gov.au .

Step 3: Do your research

- Go to a few plant nurseries to find out the cost of seedlings and compost, topsoil, water saving crystals and watering cans. Bunning's is a good place to start or maybe your local Plant Nursery may wish to be a sponsor of your street garden as a gesture of good will.

Step 4: Prepare your soil

- This is an essential step to ensure your herb gardens will be successful. The area beneath street trees is generally quite compacted. The earth needs to be dug up and aerated and also enriched with nutrients. Compost or fertiliser can be added as well as additional top soil. Water saving crystals also makes a great addition to the soil as this will ensure that as much water is saved in the beds as possible.
- You may be able to create raised garden beds around your street trees which would make it much easier to create healthy garden beds. You need to check with your local council to see if raised garden beds are allowed under your street trees.

Step 5: Plant you Herbs

- Make sure you plant your herbs with lots of space between planting to allow for spreading. These herbs are very fast growing and will fill a space very quickly. If you plant too close to each other they will fight for the space and nutrients.

Step 5: Regularly water your plants.

- Give each household who is taking part in the street garden a watering can. Draw up a roster for who waters when, or just make it the person whose house is nearest to the street tree responsible for watering.

Step 6: Share the love and watch your street garden grow

Step 7: Harvest your herbs and reap the rewards of growing your own herbs and getting to know your neighbours.