

## A possible pathway and costs for training a gardener

This is a collation of experiences rather than a road map. You may not wish to follow these options or they may not be available in your area, you may already have experience to transfer from a previous role(e.g. customer service). Again, check with providers to see what they can offer.

**Gardener**, Self-employed sole trader offering basic maintenance or employed at low grade employed gardener is expected to have:

Description of training	Time	Alternative route time
<b>Initial experience</b> Domestic,/allotment gardening	Minimum 1 day a week for a year	
Or volunteer gardening or weekend work in garden centre		1 day/week /year
<b>Basic theory training</b> RHS level 2	1 day a week, 2 eves for academic year	
Or As above through college attendance, or City and Guilds or College Certificate		1 day a week for academic year
<b>Practical training</b> RHS level 2 practical by college attendance	1 day a week for academic year	
Or Work and Retrain As a Gardener Scheme (WRAGS) trainee		2 days a week full year
Or one-year apprentice	Low wage for one yr	
<b>Generic work skills</b> Manual Handling course	Half a day	
Health and safety at work course	Half a day	
Customer service course	Half a day	
Working with volunteers course	A day	
In- service training generic work skills		2 days
<b>Equipment training</b> Safe application of pesticide certificates PA1/6	2 and a half days	
Mower, Strimmer, leafblower, hedgecutter courses	3 days	
In service equipment training		3 days

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Or Work and Retrain As a Gardener Scheme (WRAGS) trainee		2 days a week full year
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<b>Generic work skills</b> Manual Handling course	Half a day	
Health and safety at work course	Half a day	
Customer service course	Half a day	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 day /wk unpaid practical +2 days training a week for year + 8 extra days</b>	<b>1 day/wk unpaid practical + 2days Min wage +1day/wk training</b>

**Senior gardener.** Self-employed craft gardener, or employed team leader/supervisor is expected to have:

Description of training	Time	Alternative route time
<b>Minimum Experience</b> Paid gardener at national living wage Or self-employed with set-up costs	2 years	
Or Trainee scheme HBGTP/botanic garden/NT Or 2 <sup>nd</sup> year apprentice		1 year

<i>Theory training</i> RHS level 3, 2 certificates through college attendance	1 day + 2 study evenings a week		
Or as above distance learning, external exam candidate			3 evenings a week for 2 years
<i>Practical training</i> RHS level 3 practical through college attendance	1 day a week academic year		
Or several specialist short trainings eg David Austin professional rose pruning			1 day
Eg No dig gardening Charles Dowding			2 days
Eg Lantra Basic tree inspection			1 day
Eg Top fruit pruning Brogdale			1 day
Eg Systematic botany Cambridge Botanics			5 days
<i>Equipment training</i> NCPT Chainsaw maintenance and cross cutting	3 days		
Or Lantra Basic Chainsaw			2days
Chainsaw felling small trees	3 days		
Or Tractor driving			3 days
Elevated platform MEWP	1 day		
Or Mini digger			2 days
<i>Other CPD</i> Conference attendance	1 day a year		
Work placement, visit			2 days a year
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 day + 2 eves a week for 2 years + 8 extra days</b>		<b>3 eves a week for two years + 20 days</b>

**Head Gardener**, garden contractor employing others :

<b>Description of training</b>	<b>Time</b>		<b>Alternative route time</b>
<i>Experience</i> Minimum 3 years as senior gardener			
<i>Training</i> More years of experience			
other specialist training			2 evenings a week for a year

Distance learning garden design			
Managing safely			4 days
Managing as a Head Gardener-Alan Sargeant			1 day
Visit other gardens /trade shows			2 days a year
			<b>3 yrs experience +2 eves a week for 1 yr+ 3 extra days/yr</b>
Or 2 more years' experience followed by RHS Masters	1 day+ 2 evenings a week for 3 years		
Or Kew Diploma	3 years full time + 4 evenings a week		
Or horticultural HND	2 academic years,+ pt time work		
Or Hort degree	3academic years + pt time work		
	<b>2-3yrs study</b>		

**Note** all training involves potential loss of earnings.

All gardeners are expected by the public to watch Gardeners World, and listen to Gardeners Question Time,

Attend at least one horticultural show a year,

Visit at least one public garden a year and one local garden a year

Also be members of NT and RHS, and other horticultural organisations.

And be active users of horticultural social media and on-line information

### Summary

1. To become an employed gardener at low grade or self-employed general maintenance sole-trader, you need one years' experience of one day a week volunteering in a garden, working at a garden centre or gardening domestically, and 2 days a week theoretical and practical training (or a day and two evenings) plus an additional 5-8 days of training courses costing £1750-£2760 (2019/ 20 figures)

2. To become a senior employed gardener or team leader, or self-employed craft gardener, you need a further two years of experience as low paid gardener or a year on a full time training scheme on low pay. Also 1 day plus 1-2 evenings a week study for two years or equivalent over 1 year, and a further 9-20 days of training, costing £2875- £3450 (2019/ 20 figures)
3. To become a head gardener or manager or garden contractor employing others, you need a further 3 years or more experience as a senior gardener. Also further training of 3-5 training days for each of these years and 2 evenings a week study, or a higher education qualification taking 1-5 days and 2 -4 evenings a week study for 2-3 years, costing up to £27,750 in fees for a horticultural degree (2019/ 20 figures)

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