

Free or very cheap resources for horticulturists

Web addresses change frequently, if the link doesn't work try Googling it. Some resources may require creating an account or joining a group (e.g. Facebook). Use your common sense with the links here, as with all information on the internet, check other sources before accepting something as fact.

Presence on this list does not imply that the source or any information provided is endorsed by the Professional Gardeners' Trust.

Make notes for yourself as you go, as if you were studying. If you dislike or disagree with the source, examine why you do, make a case for and against.

General

AllHorts group on Facebook:

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/groups/318266538375903/about/>

Hugel and informative global database of plants. If it looks overwhelming try searching for something you know (like *Monstera deliciosa*) to get an idea of what it contains.

<https://powo.science.kew.org/>

Go Parks, currently just in Coventry and London, lists Friends Groups and ideas for getting involved with your local park; example page for Richmond upon Thames :

<https://www.goparks.london/boroughs/richmond-upon-thames>

Plantnetwork represents over 300 gardens including all the major public horticultural and botanic gardens in the countries. Good talks for members, an unrivalled place for networking and some free resources on the website. <https://plantnetwork.org/resources/>

Try also: Your local gardening society or club will have talks for a very reasonable cost.

Careers

Grow Careers website has useful resources centred around different careers in horticulture.

<https://www.horticulture.org.uk/grow-careers/>

Courses

Some free courses here: <https://www.rbge.org.uk/learn/online-courses/>

Some free courses among the costly ones: <https://www.gardenmasterclass.org/videos>

Talks/lectures

Kew Mutual Improvement Soc, not free but cheap lectures:

<https://www.kew.org/learning/talks-and-lectures/kew-mutual-improvement-society>

Apps

Free app that enables you to access a vast range of books and magazines using your library ticket. <https://www.overdrive.com/apps/libby/>

Newsletters

Email newsletter from Dan Pearson, you can subscribe for new ones, but also have a look at the back issues: <https://digdelve.com/back-issues/>

Podcasts

<https://rootsandall.co.uk/>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/about-the-rhs/publications/podcasts>

<https://gardenorganic.org.uk/podcast>

<https://www.talkingheadspodcast.co.uk/>

<https://thewildlifegardenpodcast.podbean.com/>

<https://talking-dirty.captivate.fm/>

Information on plant health, importing and exporting <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plant-health-controls#current-plant-health-issues>

Plant identification

Wild plants <https://bsbi.org/plant-id-getting-started>

Facebook Group, you will need to apply to join:

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/586029354781067>

Free downloads of RHS Trials bulletins: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/trials-awards/plant-trials/growerguides>

Try also: visit your local garden centre and see how many plants you can identify without looking at the label. Try this every month and note how the plants change.

Individual plants or plant groups

There is a list of specialist plant societies ranging from the Alpine Garden Society to the Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society. They may have special cultivation information, seed or plant exchanges and useful newsletters.

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/plantsmanship/plant-societies>

There are groups with a wider remit, like the Hardy Plant Society, which offer shows, local membership, seed exchange, specialist groups, among a host of other delights.

<https://www.hardy-plant.org.uk/>

And those with a geographical focus:

<https://www.eastangliangardengroup.co.uk/>

<http://cornwallgardensociety.org.uk/>

<https://thecaley.org.uk/>

Try looking for one in your area.

Techniques

How to draw plants <https://johnmuirlaws.com/drawing-plants/>

No dig, try Charles Dowding's channel on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCB1J6siDdmhwah7q0O2WJBg>

Try also: search YouTube for 'How to sharpen secateurs', 'How to grow sweetpeas'

Writing and thoughts

Often argumentative <https://thinkinggardens.co.uk/good-garden-articles/>

<https://thinkinggardens.co.uk/good-garden-books/>

Try also: online lists of 'best books on X' (garden design, permaculture etc) and look for them using Libby.

Therapeutic horticulture

Free starter courses: <https://thrivelearn.org.uk/learning/learning-and-information/>

Try also: start here <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/health-and-wellbeing> and follow your interests.

Climate and Environment

Free report makes a good starting point to explore these issues:

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/gardening-in-a-changing-world/climate-change>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/environment-and-conservation/2019/11/thirsty-future-ahead-climate-change-explodes-plant-growth>

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/dec/04/why-climate-change-gardening-means-breaking-all-the-rules>

Organic/peat-free/wildlife-friendly

Various events, some free: <https://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/events>

Wild about gardens: <https://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/wilder-gardens> (Kent based, but information applies in a wider context, check your local Trust).

Free peat-free growing mini-course: <https://www.forpeatssake.org.uk/>

Conservation

Get to know your local gardens <https://londongardenstrust.org/>

Specialist resources on Gardens Trust conservation issues
<https://thegardenstrust.org/conservation/hlp-hub/>

Wild plant conservation: <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk>

Cultivated plant conservation, home of the National Plant Collections:
<https://www.plantheritage.org.uk/>

Try also: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/plant-conservation-and-protection>

Types of garden

Brief introduction: <https://www.theenglishgarden.co.uk/expert-advice/design-solutions/choose-a-garden-style/>

Japanese gardens: <https://jgs.org.uk/aspects-of-the-japanese-garden/>

Mediterranean gardens: <https://www.mediterraneangardensociety.org/>

NGS Virtual visits: <https://ngs.org.uk/virtual-garden-visits/>

Garden design

<https://www.successfulgardendesigner.com/free-classes>

Learn SketchUp: <https://www.sketchup.com/plans-and-pricing/sketchup-free>

Try also: A lot of resources on YouTube of variable quality! Start here:
<https://www.youtube.com/c/TheMiddlesizedgardenCoUk> and then explore.

Garden history

Brief timeline of English garden history with links for further info: <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/histories/gardens-through-time/>

<https://gardenmuseum.org.uk/>

<https://gardenmuseum.org.uk/online-resources/>

Ignore the course, but use the course outline and suggested reading here to start off an exploration of garden history:

<https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/courses/english-landscape-gardens-1650-to-the-present-day-online>

Try also: <https://www.parksandgardens.org/>,

Political/social

RHS Ornamental Horticulture Roundtable : <https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/ornamental-horticulture-roundtable>

Try also: <https://hta.org.uk/news-current-issues/government/documents-and-briefings.html>