



BENEFITS OF NO-TILL GARDENING

Promotes natural aeration and drainage.

Worms and other soil life are important to healthy soil structure, their tunnels providing aeration and drainage, and their excretions bind together soil crumbs. No-till systems are said to be free of pests and disease, possibly due to a more balanced soil population being allowed to build up in this comparatively undisturbed environment, and by encouraging the buildup of beneficial soil fungi.

Saves water.

Thick layers of mulch allow water to pass through easily while shading the soil. This reduces water lost to evaporation while maintaining a moist growing environment beneficial for root growth.

Reduces or eliminates the need to weed.

Most garden soils contain weed seeds which lay dormant until the soil is disturbed and the seeds become exposed to light. With no-till gardening, these seeds will remain dormant indefinitely. Of course, some weeds will appear in the beds, borne by wind or birds. These weeds are easy to remove by hand if you pull them early in the morning or shortly after watering, while the soil is damp.

Saves time and energy.

Whether you turn your garden beds by hand or use a gas-powered rototiller, you'll save energy by using the no-till method. Although some effort is required in gathering materials for mulching, and applying the mulch during the growing season, no digging or turning of the soil is required.

No-till gardening helps soil retain carbon.

Healthy topsoil contains carbon-enriched humus and decaying organic matter that provides nutrients to plants. Soils low in humus can't maintain the carbon-dependent nutrients essential to healthy crop production, resulting in the need to use more fertilizers. Tilling the soil speeds the breakdown of organic matter, which releases nutrients too quickly. A steady, slow release of nutrients is more beneficial to plant growth.

Builds earthworm population.

The moist conditions of the soil beneath mulch creates the ideal environment for earthworms, whose activity aerates the soil and stimulates root growth.

The longer no till gardening is practiced and the sooner compost is added or plant remains left to decompose in the field, the better the soil structure becomes. *Over time, the yields have proven to be higher with this method.*



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