

Things to consider before building a greenhouse

Avid gardeners may be enticed by the idea of a greenhouse that allows them to explore their passion for plants year-round. While it's true that greenhouses afford this luxury, there are important things to consider before erecting a greenhouse in your yard.

Greenhouses require ample time to maintain. Greenhouses are not self-managing; they require heat, water, venting, electricity, and maintenance on the part of gardeners. Individuals need to determine how much time they have to devote to a greenhouse and then consider their options.



Start by choosing the size of the greenhouse. Many experts, like those at the home and garden information site The Spruce, suggest getting the largest one you can afford and fit into the yard. It is much easier to fill a large greenhouse than try to expand on a small one later on.

Next, consider whether you want to build the greenhouse from scratch or utilize a prefabricated kit that can make easier work of the job. Kits typically contain all of the materials needed, and are easiest for someone who is a construction novice. Look for "grower greenhouses," which are all-purpose options with adjustable shelving and space for growing plants full-term. The next step is deciding where the greenhouse will be located. The goal is to have a consistent amount of sunlight year-round. A south-facing locale is ideal, and structures should remain north of the greenhouse so they do not cast a shadow on it. The building, cars and technology resource Popular Mechanics advises gardening enthusiasts to take into consideration the angle of the sun during all seasons



before choosing a location. Doing so ensures that the sun is not obscured in the winter or fall.

Greenhouses can be a great addition to a yard for those who know what to expect.

Select a spot that also has ample drainage, as you will not want water pooling up along the sides of or underneath the greenhouse. Raise the greenhouse on footings to alleviate flooding concerns.

Consult with a gardening or agriculture expert about the best way to heat the greenhouse. Options abound with electric-, gas- and propane-powered heating sources. Some systems will require venting. You also will need to know what is available and legal in your area. Check to see if you need a building permit for the greenhouse and any accompanying heating elements. Once the greenhouse is situated, you can begin to add other items, like benches, additional shelving, hooks for tools, and even an automated watering or misting system. Greenhouses take commitment, but the reward is the chance to enjoy gardening all year long.

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