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Selecting the Perfect Plants for Your Small Flower Gardens

THINGS YOU MUST CONSIDER

- **Budget**

Draw a sketch...create a landscape plan.

Consider hardscape costs (fence, path, bird bath, bench, dining set, etc.)

Consider site preparation costs (topsoil, fertilizers, organic mulch)

Consider plant material costs (trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals)

- **Site Evaluation**

Hardiness Zone (<http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/>)

Microclimate

Sun exposure (Full Sun = more than 6 hours, Part Sun = 4-6, Shade = less than 4 hours)

Soil type and pH (<http://soiltest.cfans.umn.edu/>)

Location

Existing plants...and their root systems!

Area "true" size

- **Desired Purposes**

entertaining area visual interest

dining area cut flowers

cooking area fragrance

privacy attract wildlife

relaxation grow edibles

- **Maintenance Requirements**

THINGS YOU SHOULD CONSIDER

- **Your Garden Style**

Cottage, Country, English, Gothic, Japanese, Southwestern, Spanish, Victorian, "Mixed"

- **Your Garden Theme**

Kitchen, Moonlight, Native, Rock, Tropical, Woodland, "Mixed"

CREATING A LANDSCAPE DESIGN

- **Selecting Color Families**
 - **Complementary Colors** = two, opposite on color wheel
 - **Analogous Colors** = two, next to each other on color wheel
 - **Triad of Colors** = three, equally spaced on color wheel
 - **Monochromatic Colors** = one color, different hues
- **Selecting Colors**
 - **Warm Colors** = good for sun and shade, good for front yards / reds, oranges, yellows
 - **Cool Colors** = good for shade, good for backyard gardens / blues, purples, greens, pastels
- **Layout**
 - **Go with irregular shapes** for border gardens and island gardens
 - **Go with curved lines**
- **Focal Point**
 - **Decide nature and placement**
 - **Some possible structural choices:** meandering path, garden bench, water fountain, obelisk, tables and chairs
 - **Some possible plant choices:** specimen tree, climbing vine on supporting structure, group of shrub roses
- **Plants**
 - **Actual available space and mature size of selected plants** will determine the final number of plants needed
 - **Suggested numbers** = no more than five plant types and three specimens of each type
 - **Go with dwarf, compact versions** ('nanus', 'nana', 'pumilus', 'pumila')

A FEW RECOMMENDED PLANTS

Trees

Common Name (Scientific Name)	Exposure	Height / Spread	Zone
Three Flowered Maple (<i>Acer triflorum</i>)	Sun	20' / 15'	4 (3)
Purple Blow Maple (<i>Acer truncatum</i>)	Sun	20' / 20'	4 (3)
Mountain Maple (<i>Acer spicatum</i>)	Sun	20'	4 (3)
Moosewood Maple (<i>Acer pensylvanicum</i>)	Sun - Part Shade	20'	4 (3)
Korean Maple (<i>Acer pseudosieboldianum</i>)	Sun	15' / 10'	4 (3)

Shrubs

Common Name / Variety	Exposure	Height / Spread	Bloom Color	Bloom Time	Zone
Hydrangea 'Little Quick Fire'	Sun - Part Sun	60" / 60"	Pink + White	Spring-Sum.	3
Hydrangea 'Strawberry Sundae'	Sun - Part Sun	60" / 60"	Pink + White	Summer	3
Hydrangea 'Bobo'	Sun - Part Sun	36" / 48"	White	Summer	3
Barberry 'Sunjoy Gold Beret'	Sun - Part Sun	12" / 18"	NA	NA	4 (3)
Weigela 'Sunset'	Sun - Part Sun	18" / 24"	Pink	Spring-Sum.	4 (3)
Summersweet 'Crystalina'	Sun - Part Sun	36" / 36"	White	Late summer	4 (3)
Forsythia 'Starlet'	Sun	36" / 36"	Yellow	Spring-Sum.	4 (3)
Forsythia 'Sugar Baby'	Sun	30" / 30"	Yellow	Spring-Sum.	4 (3)
Arbovitae 'Filip's Magic Moment'	Sun - Part Sun	96" / 36"	NA	NA	3
Arbovitae 'Anna's Magic Ball'	Sun - Part Sun	15" / 15"	NA	NA	3
Ninebark 'Tiny Wine'	Sun	48" / 48"	NA	NA	3
Lilac 'Scent and Sensibility'	Sun	36" / 72"	Pink	Spring-Sum.	3

Perennials

Common Name / Variety	Exposure	Height / Spread	Bloom Color	Bloom Time	Zone
Garden Phlox 'Pink Flame'	Sun	18" / 14"	Pink	Spring-Sum.	4 (3)
Garden Phlox 'Purple Flame'	Sun	18" / 14"	Purple	Spring-Sum.	4 (3)
Garden Phlox 'White Flame'	Sun	18" / 14"	White	Spring-Sum.	4 (3)
Astilbe 'Younique Pink'	Part Sun - Shade	18" / 18"	Light Pink	Summer	3
Astilbe 'Visions'	Part Sun - Shade	18" / 18"	Dark Pink	Summer	3
Aster 'Alert'	Sun	12" / 16"	Red	Fall	4 (3)
Bee Balm 'Petite Delight'	Sun - Part Sun	16" / 18"	Purple	Summer	4 (3)
Bee Balm 'Fireball'	Sun - Part Sun	15" / 24"	Red	Summer	3
Black-Eyed Susan 'Little Goldstar'	Sun - Part Sun	16" / 16"	Yellow	Sum.-Fall	4 (3)
Purple Coneflower 'Kim's Knee High'	Sun - Part Sun	24" / 24"	Pink	Summer	3
Russian Sage 'Little Spire'	Sun	24" / 24"	Violet-Blue	Sum. - Fall	4 (3)

Rhubarb 'Giant Grooveless

Crimson' 24" H / 48" W

Annuals

Common Name / Variety	Exposure	Height / Spread	Bloom Color	Bloom Time	Zone
Purple Fountain Grass 'Red Riding Hood'	Sun	30" / 20"	Pink	Sum. - Fall	9

Edibles

Variety	Days to Maturity	Height	Fruit Type
Tomato 'Tiny Tim'	45 days	Determinate	Cherry
Tomato 'Bush Early Girl'	52 days	Determinate	Large
Tomato 'Patio Hybrid'	65 days	Determinate	Large
Tomato 'Husky Red Hybrid'	68 days	Indeterminate	Large

Tomato 'Husky Gold Hybrid'	70 days	Indeterminate	Large
Tomato 'Husky Pink Hybrid'	72 days	Indeterminate	Large
Bean - Green Bush 'Contender'	50 days		
Bean - Green Bush 'Labrador'	57 days		
Bean - Lima Bush 'Jackson Wonder'	65 days		
Bean - Lima Bush 'Eastland'	70 days		
Bean - Purple Bush 'Royalty'	55 days		
Bean - Wax Bush 'Golden Wax'	50 days		
Bean - Wax Bush 'Goldcrop'	54 days		
Peppers			
Herbs			
Lettuce			

RESOURCES - PUBLISHED

- *Small Garden Handbook*. Andrew Wilson. 2014.
- *The City Gardener's Handbook*. Linda Yang. 2002.
- *Small Gardens*. Glenn Morris. 1999.

RESOURCES - ONLINE

- <http://blog.americanmeadows.com/2011/03/09/recommended-perennial-plants-for-small-space-gardens/>

