

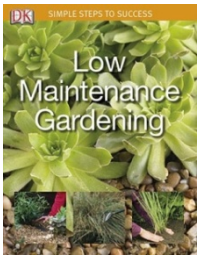
Hope Branch Spring Landscaping and Garden Books

I'm a Midwestern guy, not just by mailing address, but in my heart too. One of the ways that I know that is by the changing of the seasons. I look forward to it four times a year. I'm really tired of this cold blustery stuff, and I'm ready to be outside and more than anything for me, that means spending time in the garden.

But 'garden' is a tricky word. To some people, it means flowers, landscaping and beautiful plantings arranged in artful displays. But to some of us, if you can't eat it, it gets sorely neglected, no matter how pretty it is. But early spring is a time for flowers, and even though I have tomato seedlings in my windowsill, they aren't pretty.

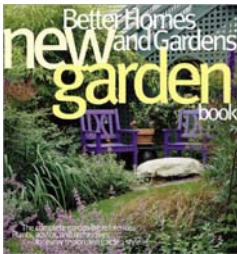
Right now, daffodils are pretty, and much more worthy of our attentions. If you're looking to spruce things up around the yard this spring, these are books that can help with ideas and practical suggestions.

Low Maintenance Garden by Jennifer Hendy



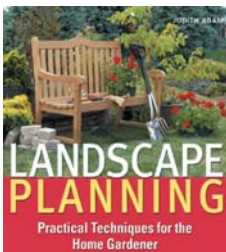
This title is just what most of us need, a guide to gardens that are low maintenance and trouble free. Of course, there is considerable work involved in setting up a low maintenance garden! This book has excellent illustrations and pictures to show you exactly how to create paved walkways, raised beds, grassy meadow gardens and shrubs to give your yard an instant upgrade.

Better Homes and Gardens New Garden Book



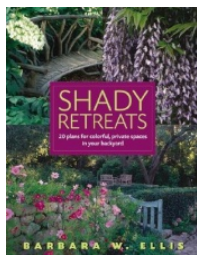
While this is a large book (599 pages), it covers a little bit of everything that could ever be related to cultivating plants. As such, it's a great book for a beginner, or if you want a little bit of information on a topic that you are new to, such as growing roses or pruning trees. It also contains an encyclopedia of garden pests to help identify those weird little bugs that keep eating everything you plant.

Landscape Planning by Judith Adam



Rather than discussing how to actually grow plants, this book focuses much more on putting them together, along with stones, structures and walkways, into a plan for landscaping your entire property. These ideas range from the very grandiose (who's ready to build a terraced slope in your back yard?) to everyday suggestions for plantings for various uses. It also contains a handy list of recommended perennials month by month to ensure blooms all year long.

Shady Retreats by Barbara Ellis



Shade Gardening is quite a specialty, and if you have a mostly shady yard, getting anything attractive to grow on it can be a real challenge. This book exclusively deals with that problem, from both a gardener's and a landscape designer's point of view. All through the book are lists of plants that thrive in low light conditions, and how they can be best featured in your garden.

Dave Miller is Hope Branch Supervisor, Bartholomew County Public Library