

Monsoon gardening tips

Monsoon is the season of beauty in Bangladesh. Everything around you is fresh, rain soaked, and green; even the polluted Dhaka air feels fresh. Our streets, our cityscape, rooftop gardens, the plants in the balconies — all beaming at their brightest.

While there is no need to water your plants regularly during monsoon, heavy rainfall does take its toll on gardens. And you still need to do your bit; the gardener has to be twice as hardworking simply to keep the greens healthy, preserve the beauty of the garden, stop the plants from water stagnation and a lot more. Let me point out a few gardening hacks that might help during the heavy monsoon.

Avoid standing water

The accumulation of the rainwater in your garden or pots is a major issue. It causes soil nutrients to wash away, depriving your plants of all the nourishment. Moreover, water stagnation for a lengthy period can make the roots rot. You must make sure that the tubs have holes in order to drain out the excess water, and if the soil is all black and muddy, then re-potting is a must to save the plant.

One of my personal hacks is to make provision for drainage in big drums by drilling holes on the sides, allowing extra water to flow out. This prevents water stagnation in drums for big trees.

Make pathways in your garden by lowering the height at places for the water to drain properly. Make sure all your drainage systems are working properly. Many times, dry leaves or dirt block the drain tracks causing water stagnation.

Make way for new growth

This is the right time for new shoots to grow but they will need some space for that. If you don't, your garden will look like a mini jungle within a few days. Thus, pruning your plants in a timely manner is a must. Also, make sure to you use proper pruning and cutting tools for the task. Weeding is also an essential part of monsoon garden maintenance. Weeds can grow rapidly during monsoon rains and thus soak up the nourishment intended for your



plants. Keep trimming your garden at timely intervals to avoid unnecessary undergrowth.

Make way for light

The cloudy skies of monsoon evidently create an issue when it comes to light, especially if you have plants that are dependent on sunlight. And the thick foliage of your big plants shades the garden top. Make sure to place pots facing the sun and properly trim foliage at regular intervals. Use garden lights.

Things to consider

Another little detail is to avoid walking on wet soil, especially where you intend to plant new saplings. This packs

the soil particles together and squeezes out the necessary oxygen.

Also, earthworms are a gardener's best friend; they keep the soil aerated. Utilise earthworms and fertilisers to ensure that your soil never loses its fertility.

Perforated sheets, allow the plants to keep their moisture and protect them from excess rain water, so these are gaining popularity as an essential during the monsoon.

Checking for any slimy algae that

begins to grow with the onset of monsoon, is a must because they can make the ground surface slippery.

On a happier note, Star Lifestyle is turning 20 today, and we wish all our readers, advertisers and patrons on this occasion, and thank them for staying with LS — your favourite lifestyle magazine, through thick or thin. We hope to make your Tuesday mornings merrier for the next 20 years and beyond.

Happy gardening!

— RBR

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

A STAR LIFESTYLE RECIPE COMPETITION 2020

The year 2020 is taking its heavy toll on us and yet we do not tire. We fight back in myriad ways, to emerge as winners against the ominous pandemic.

In order to keep the spirit alive, Star Lifestyle has planned to organise a cooking competition for all our home chefs (young and old), to generate a scrumptious platter for Qurbani Eid and showcase their talents to the rest of the world.

The competition requires interested individuals to send, ONE complete menu of breakfast, lunch, or dinner by 17 JULY 2020. Participants are required to send ONE recipe from that menu that will highlight the contestant's culinary prowess.

The recipe needs to be attached with high-resolution pictures of the food from the menu, so that it helps us select the best of the chefs and ensure authenticity of the items.

Winners to secure the first, second, and third positions will be given the opportunity to become recipe columnists for Star Lifestyle, the prestigious supplement of The Daily Star.

The champion will get the opportunity to collaborate with The Daily Star, to produce an exclusive recipe video, which will be shared and viewed by our readers and patrons.

So gear up and send us the menu, recipe, and images ASAP to lifestyleds@yahoo.com, and mark 'Living in my Kitchen' in your mail as subject.

Check out #starlifestyleds in Instagram and Facebook for details.

***CONDITIONS APPLY:

- To take part in the competition applicants must be 21 years and above by July 1, 2020.
- Recipe MUST be attached with pictures of the food – final decision will be based on the plating alongside the content.
- Any recipes received after the deadline will not be considered eligible for the competition.
- Decisions regarding the competition lie solely at the discretion of Star Lifestyle, The Daily Star.

◆ HOROSCOPE ◆



ARIES (MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Discuss your intentions. Make creative changes at home. Family members will rely on you. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



TAURUS (APR. 21-MAY 21)

Make money off your ideas. Changes around you will be drastic. Find ways to relieve stress. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



GEMINI (MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Make changes to your appearance. Empty promises will be upsetting. Partnerships could prove to be lucrative. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



CANCER (JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Ask for help if needed. Don't be too eager to spend. Don't expect any favours. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



LEO (JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Your partner can cause you grief. Spend time getting acquainted. Get involved in groups. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Find likeminded friends in group activities. Don't spend unnecessarily on friends. Don't shy away from potential romances. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



LIBRA (SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Your determination will pay off. Don't pursue anything unrealistic. Travel will promote new romantic encounters. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



SCORPIO (OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Business and pleasure can mix together. Someone will let you down. Join a club of like-minded people. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Use your creativity for new directions. Use your head wisely. Don't let jealousy overpower you. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Be true to yourself. Problems with in-laws can cause grief. Don't come on too strongly. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



AQUARIUS (JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Make plans for travel. Discrimination will be in order. Control your temper with your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



PISCES (FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Multitasking will prove to be difficult. Accept defeat gracefully. Health problems can arise. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.