

Understanding Your Garden's Environmental Factors

Your garden plants will flourish when given the right conditions. Some plants will only thrive in a hot, sunny area while others may need a cool, moist and shady area. You need to choose a garden spot that is best suited to the plants you plan to grow.

Climate The climate can cause a variety of responses in growing plants depending on their location, its stage of maturity, the type of weather and the length of time they were exposed to it. Climate can have a huge effect on plant development and growth, especially when the weather conditions are extreme.

Temperature All plants have their own maximum and minimum temperature tolerances. If they are exposed to temperatures that are too high or too low, they will die. Normally, the maximum temperature for healthy growth is about 95 degrees Fahrenheit. The minimum temperature can vary dramatically depending on the plant. The air and soil temperature usually determine the length of the growing season. Soil temperature can also determine a plant's root development and how many nutrients can be absorbed. Sandy soils warm up faster than clay soils so plants can be started in them earlier in the year.

Water All plants need water. Some of the required water will come from rainfall although much of it is absorbed by the soil and does not get to the plant root. So, your garden must be located in an area where water can be gotten to easily. In some cases, there can be too much water. Most plants will not survive in boggy areas or where climate conditions are extremely humid. Some of this depends on whether water can be drained from soil adequately. Soil that is made up of clay has poor drainage.

Light Plants require some sunlight to produce photosynthesis which helps plants produce their own food. Plants will not grow in an area that has no sun at all. Seasonal changes in the sun will also determine how a plant grows and thrives.

Air Circulation Even a moderate amount of wind can cause damage to fragile plants. However, a light wind can be beneficial when it provides relief from extreme heat. A light breeze can also help prevent plant diseases by moving stagnant air away from them.

Microclimate Some gardens may be protected from the weather conditions by trees and hedges. This causes what experts call a microclimate. There are several factors that affect the microclimate in a garden. These are hedges and fences, shadows from houses and walls, areas of strong sunlight, boggy areas, the soil type, and soil pH. Microclimate is also affected by the plants that are already in the area and by the flatness or hilliness of the land. A garden located in a sloped area can have major drainage problems. Once you know your garden's environment, you will be better able to choose the correct plants for your garden site. Each garden spot will have its own challenges and advantages so it will be up to you to choose the best plants to take advantage of them.

About the Author

For more information on Container Gardening, visit <http://www.guideforgardeners.com>, a website that provides tips and information on all types of gardening.

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