Pick Your Spot

Site & Design Checklist — a printable companion to Guide 1 of 6

Site Assessment

- [ ] Measure the garden area's length and width.
- [ ] Track sunlight hours in each candidate spot, as covered in Section 01.
- [ ] Find your USDA Hardiness Zone by searching online with your zip code.
- [ ] Locate your nearest water source by marking the closest hose or spigot.
- [ ] Note existing features, such as trees, fences, slopes, and buildings, that will cast shade or block access.

Layout, Access & Zones

- [ ] Sketch a rough property layout and mark your sun and shade findings on it.
- [ ] Plan a main walkway (3 to 4 feet wide) and any secondary paths (2 feet wide) so the bed stays reachable from every side.
- [ ] Consider who'll be gardening, and make sure bed height and path width work for kids, elders, or anyone using a walker.
- [ ] Decide which growing zones you want first, whether in-ground, raised beds, containers, or a mix.
- [ ] Place tall plants or structures where they won't shade the bed you just picked.
- [ ] Pick at least one comfort feature, such as a seat, shade, or path, so the space invites you back.

Water Planning

- [ ] Create water zones by grouping plants according to how much water they'll need.
- [ ] Plan your main water routes and hose connections before anything else goes in the ground.
- [ ] Decide on an irrigation method, whether hand watering, soaker hoses, or drip.
- [ ] Position a rain barrel or cistern under a downspout if you want to collect rainwater.

Before You Build

- [ ] Set a rough budget for seeds, soil, tools, and any structures or water systems you're adding.
- [ ] Decide how much time you actually want to spend maintaining this, and size the bed to match.
- [ ] Write down your last frost date next to your plan, as covered in Section 05.

Condensed from RootDelight's Garden Planning Checklist and Ultimate Edible Backyard Garden Design Checklist. Read the full guide and check your progress online at rootdelight.com/rd_courses/pick_your_spot.html.