

Gardening and arthritis



**VERSUS
ARTHRITIS**

WE ARE VERSUS ARTHRITIS

We're the 10 million people living with arthritis. We're the carers, researchers, health professionals, friends and parents all united in our ambition to ensure that one day, no one will have to live with the pain, fatigue and isolation that arthritis causes.

We understand that every day is different. We know that what works for one person may not help someone else. Our information is a collaboration of experiences, research and facts. We aim to give you everything you need to know about your condition, the treatments available and the many options you can try, so you can make the best and most informed choices for your lifestyle.

We're always happy to hear from you whether it's with feedback on our information, to share your story, or just to find out more about the work of Versus Arthritis. Contact us at content@versusarthritis.org

Registered office: Versus Arthritis, Copeman House, St Mary's Gate, Chesterfield S41 7TD
Registered Charity England and Wales No. 207711, Scotland No. SC041156.

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PENNY'S STORY

Penny has osteoarthritis in both hands, including her thumbs.

“I’m a self-employed gardener and I look after 20 to 25 gardens on a weekly or fortnightly basis. I do general gardening, weeding, tidying, pruning, planting, and help people come up with ideas.

The thumbs have become a bit of an issue. But I am determined not to let arthritis stop me gardening. I want to carry on for the customers I serve, a lot of whom are over 80. Gardening can create a great sense of pride and satisfaction, as you see the garden grow and bloom.

I saw a hand specialist who taught me how to carry on for as long as I can by swapping between tasks to minimise the pressure on my hand joints.

I don’t do heavy landscaping. I’ve got a little network of people who can do the jobs I can’t. I have a friend who has a ride-on lawnmower and does the lawns of the big gardens. And there is someone who can do the high up pruning.

Gardens are so important as they get people outside. Some people I work with have arthritis or osteoporosis.

One woman I work for who has arthritis comes out with her seat and sits and does her work while I’m there. She likes the social side of it.

I have a customer who is 87. He’s an ex-rugby player, and he likes to do his mowing while I do the bits he can’t do.

It’s annoying and frustrating at times to know you can’t do as much as you used to. But, you have to think ahead with arthritis. It’s so easy to get carried away and you might get distracted and do too much.

It’s not a weakness, it’s just accepting the situation and working with it and working around it.

I mix the jobs up and make sure I am not doing the repetitive tasks for too long. You could take a mobile phone out with you and put an alarm on so that you’re not doing the same thing for too long, or if you have an outdoor clock keep an eye on that.

As well as mixing up tasks, and pacing through the day, I pace through the week and have rest days. I know that if I do too much one day, that I might not be able to do anything for the next four to five days.

You might not be able to do all aspects of gardening or do it as aggressively as you used to. You might need to get someone in to help. Don’t be afraid to ask for help.

Being outside in the fresh air, seeing something come into flower is amazing. There is nothing better than working outside and seeing a little robin land on your spade.

Or when there is frost or snow and you see snowdrops peak through; that is joy and hope. Whatever else is going on, gardens show that life still carries on and you can still carry on.”

Protecting your joints

Gardening is a really good form of exercise. It can also be very rewarding and great for your mental health. However, some repetitive and heavy-duty actions involved in gardening can be difficult and cause discomfort if you have arthritis.

You should aim for a balance between exercising your joints and muscles to stay mobile without straining them. 'Little and often' is usually the best approach and switching between different gardening jobs will help. Good protective clothing, such as gloves and hand and wrist splints, as well as ergonomic equipment, can help take the strain off your joints.

The following tips should help you continue gardening and reduce pain and inflammation in your joints:

Change tasks to reduce repeated strain on the same joints. Don't be tempted to press on until the job is finished. Try switching tasks after 20 minutes, or after a shorter time if you need to. Have a rest if you need it, and then switch to a task that uses different joints. For example, break up harder jobs like hoeing weeds with spells of something gentler like deadheading or pricking out seedlings. Use a timer to pace yourself, or set a reminder on your phone, if you think it would be useful.

Spread the load. Try to spread the weight of items when you carry them by resting them on your forearms and hands, rather than trying to pick them up with your fingers only. Try resting a tray of seedlings on your forearms, for example. Keep your elbows tucked in to reduce the strain on your shoulders and elbows (see Figure 1).

Use a garden stool. This will save you energy and reduce the load on weight-bearing joints. It might limit your reach, so you will need to plan your borders around this, or you could buy lightweight, long-reach or extendable handled tools. For other tasks, sitting could allow you to use shorter, and therefore lightweight, tools. Make sure you can get up easily from the stool – avoid sitting too long and getting stiff as this will make rising more difficult. Some garden stools reverse to form seats with handles.

Get a good grip. Slip a spongy rubber sleeve over the handle of a hoe or rake to increase grip. This will reduce the strain on your knuckles and jarring of the joints (see Figure 2). A good pair of gloves also helps you to grip more easily. If you find it difficult to find gloves to fit – for example, if your arthritis has changed the shape of your hand – think about trying gloves made from elasticated material that fits on the hand and can then be strapped using Velcro. Alternatively, gloves that don't have the full finger length but which have flexible material may be useful.

Figure 1. Spread the load.

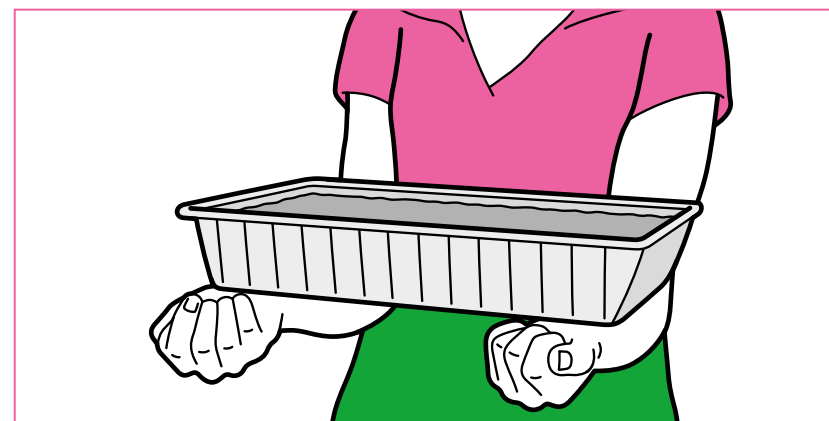
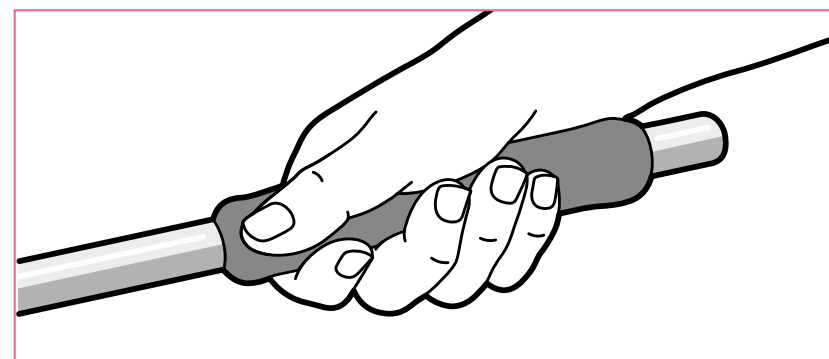


Figure 2. Get a good grip.



Wear splints. An occupational therapist will be able to advise on whether splints might help to support the joints of your hands and wrists to reduce the strain of some gardening tasks. A wrist splint may be helpful if you have painful or weak wrists, while a thumb splint may be useful for tasks that need a firm grip, for example pruning. Wearing gardening gloves, or gloves with rubber on the palm and fingertips, over splints will keep them clean, and also increase your grip.



Plan ahead to avoid unnecessary effort. If walking is difficult, avoid too many journeys up and down the garden by taking all the things you need in a wheelbarrow, bucket or trug. This will cause less strain on your hands, wrists, elbows and shoulders. Try not to start too many things that must be attended to whether you feel like it or not, and don't worry too much about weeds and not getting all your jobs done – they can always wait for another day.



Seek help with heavier jobs. Decide beforehand what you need help with and what you prefer to do yourself. Make sure that a well-meaning and enthusiastic helper doesn't take on more than you really want them to.

If it suits you, could you afford to pay for professional help either on a regular basis or every now and then? You could ask them to do jobs you struggle with, allowing you to continue with tasks you enjoy and don't find difficult.

Avoid heavy lifting. If you can't get help lifting bags of compost, especially from the boot of a car, think about buying two or more small bags instead of one large one. Many manufacturers now include handles on their compost bags, which makes them much easier to carry. Another option is to find expandable compost that's dehydrated and much lighter.

Some garden centres deliver items such as compost, sand or gravel, and put them in your shed or garage.

Use the correct tools for the job. Use lightweight or long-handled tools, carry items in a wheeled device and keep gardening cutters sharp and well maintained for ease of use – do this with care if you decide to do this yourself.

If you're looking for lightweight gardening equipment specially designed for people with arthritis, you might find something that suits your needs on the Arthr website.

Arthr is a social venture powered by Versus Arthritis. Arthr's products are co-created and tested with people who have a first-hand understanding of the day-to-day challenges of living with arthritis. All profits are invested back into developing better products for people with arthritis and into the services, support and research of Versus Arthritis.

Visit their website www.arthr.com/our-products or call them on 0808 196 7834.



Low-maintenance gardens

Planning your garden and choosing low-maintenance plants will make things easier if you go on holiday or into hospital, or if you don't feel up to gardening for a while.

Lawns need mowing regularly in the summer, so if you're often away from home and don't have reliable help it may be worth replacing the lawn with a low-maintenance area such as paving or gravel. Many artificial grasses are now available as an alternative to a lawn. Growing in raised beds, planters and containers are other ways to enjoy plants when you have removed lawns and borders.

An occupational therapist can suggest changes to the way you do tasks or tools that will reduce the strain.



Plants like elephant's ears, cranesbill, lavender and periwinkle backed by shrubs such as barberry, escallonia, senecio and viburnum can take care of themselves for long periods once their roots are deep in the soil.

Create a wildlife area using wildflower seeds, which don't usually need tending, although you'll need to prepare the ground well beforehand to avoid getting more weeds than flowers. This is also good for encouraging wildlife into the garden.

There are a number of books and websites on low-maintenance gardening which will suggest plants that don't need a great deal of attention.

Visit the Royal Horticultural Society's website www.rhs.org.uk and search low maintenance gardening.



If a particular task causes difficulty or discomfort, it may help to speak to an occupational therapist. They'll help you to understand why the task is causing pain and suggest changes to the way you do tasks or tools that will reduce the strain.

Garden layout

Working in the garden can be much easier if you give some thought to its layout. You may need to get some help initially to make changes to your garden, but in the longer term this should allow you to manage most of your gardening jobs yourself.

Paths and beds

Ideally there should be firm paths alongside the beds and borders, especially if you have difficulty keeping your balance on uneven ground. You can then tend to most of the area without having to step onto the soil. The beds should be quite narrow so you can reach the middle and back without stretching.

Non-slip paving slabs, and compressed gravel, make safe paths. Cut slabs can be used for shallow steps where the ground level changes. Wooden handrails alongside steps are also helpful.

If you find it difficult to bend to ground level or need to work from a wheelchair, a raised bed would be helpful. If you have a sloping garden, you can make a terrace by building a low wall and filling behind with soil, which has the effect of making a raised bed. Even raising the soil level a small amount will make the bed easier to manage.

Containers

Containers can also help you work at a convenient height. Annual bedding plants, heathers, herbs, spring bulbs and even smaller vegetables and fruit trees can be grown in this way. Heavy tubs can be put on wheels in case you need to move them around. Wheeled containers with a braking system are also available – these may be easier to manage, but they're more expensive. You could raise containers on bricks, or on top of other upturned heavier containers.

Herbaceous borders

The word herbaceous means plants that don't have woody stems above the ground. They can be perennials, which means they last for more than two years, or the more short-lived annuals and biennials.

Traditional herbaceous borders need a lot of attention – staking, pruning, dividing, dead-heading and weeding. You can reduce the need for staking taller plants by choosing self-supporting varieties, for instance lupins, phlox, yarrow and Japanese anemones.

If you can't reach the back of the border easily, it's better to plant shrubs that need less attention. Spurge, spindle tree, spotted laurel, cinquefoil and Mexican orange blossom are good examples. Small annuals such as pansies and marigolds can be planted near the path, but an edging of pinks or lady's mantle will create less work.

Fruit

You can buy fruit trees that have been grafted onto dwarfing rootstocks. This restricts their growth, making the fruit easy to reach. You can grow fruit trees as cordons in a slanting row, or espaliers and fans, perhaps against a wall or fence. You can restrict their height to whatever suits you by pruning in August.

Gooseberry plants can be grown on a leg – a single clear stem 60–90 cm (2–3 feet) high. This saves you bending down to pick them. Strawberries are easier to gather if they're grown through holes in a barrel or in hanging baskets.

Vegetables

If you want to grow tomatoes and courgettes outside but your soil isn't good enough, you can use growbags. Growbags that have been used for growing tomatoes and cucumbers in the greenhouse can be recycled the following year for salad crops such as lettuce, radishes, spring onions and beetroot. You can place the bags on a bench if it's easier to reach them. Many fruit and vegetables can also be grown in hanging baskets or raised containers, which can make them easier to tend and harvest.



The deep-bed and no-dig method

A labour-saving way of growing vegetables is the deep-bed method. You may need help with digging the plot to start with, but then no further digging is needed for several years. Divide the plot into strips 1.2 m (4 feet) wide, separated by paved paths. Dig the ground over well, adding compost or alternatives into each trench. Don't walk over the soil after this stage. All cultivation, planting, weeding, feeding and harvesting is done from the paths using long-handled tools.

Because the soil isn't compacted, sowings of root crops can be spread more densely than normal over the whole surface – the growing plants push each other sideways in the easily crumbled soil. You don't need to sow in rows, and planting many seeds will make it harder for weeds to grow.

You'll need to lay a fresh supply of compost or mulch on the surface during the following autumn. This will work down into the soil by the action of worms and by weathering during the winter. A little light cultivation in the spring will make sure it's completely mixed in.

There is a school of thought that a no-dig approach is better for the environment, as well as saving you heavy work. If you search for 'no-dig' on the internet you will find plenty of good advice, such as at Garden Organic: www.gardenorganic.org.uk/no-dig-method

The lawn

Some people increase the size of their lawn to reduce the area of cultivated borders. However, a lawn needs regular attention if it's to look its best. If you find it difficult to look after, it might be better to have narrow beds separated by paths or to pave or gravel the area, leaving spaces to plant shrubs or annuals.

Island beds in lawns make mowing more complicated. It's easier to move the mower around if the lawn is a simple shape with straight edges. Make sure the mower is stored somewhere that you can access easily.



Garden buildings

If you can, place garden buildings such as greenhouses, potting sheds, tool sheds and cold frames near each other. This will save you carrying pots, compost and seed trays too far.

The lids of some glazed cold frames are very heavy to lift. A raised frame with a hinged lid covered with lightweight corrugated plastic sheeting and connected to a pulley and counterbalance weight is much safer and easier to manage.

The greenhouse

The staging in a greenhouse should be at the right height. You should be able to work comfortably while sitting on a chair. You may prefer to rest your elbows and forearms on the staging while you work. If all the staging is at the same height, it's easy to slide trays along without lifting them.

Thermostatically-controlled fan heaters, automatic vent openers and capillary watering systems go a long way to providing the right growing conditions with minimum effort. By using growbags for tomatoes and cucumbers you can even avoid digging the border soil.

If you use a wheelchair, choose your greenhouse with care. Make sure the doorways are wide enough and the thresholds low enough for wheelchair access.

Hedges and fences

Even slow-growing hedges like yew need trimming once a year, but hand shears can cause joint pain and some hedge trimmers are quite heavy. Keep your hedges low so you don't need to stretch too much. Lavender and box make good low hedges for dividing up the garden. A row of fruit trees grown as cordons makes a decorative hedge, perhaps to separate an ornamental garden from the vegetable plot.

A wooden fence that's been put up properly and treated with preservative will last for many years without attention and can be used as a support for climbing plants. Plastic fencing is also available and should need even less attention. If your garden is in a windy location look for windproof fencing options.

Garden seating

Garden seating shouldn't be too low and should have a supportive backrest. If you're thinking of buying some new garden seating, it's worth trying before you buy to make sure it's a comfortable height and has the right support for your back. Having seating in your garden will encourage you to pace yourself and take frequent breaks, especially if it's placed in the areas you work in most. It'll also give you somewhere to admire and enjoy your work from. Using fold away lightweight chairs can be useful as these can be kept in a shed or garage whilst not in use.

Maintaining the garden

There's a wide variety of garden tools designed to make cultivation, weeding, pruning and tidying up easier. If possible, you should handle the tools before buying them so you can test them for weight and balance.

Digging the soil

Improving the quality of your soil will make cultivation easier. Heavy clay can be made lighter by digging in good garden compost. Adding sharp sand or grit allows air into the soil, making it easier for roots to bed in. It also makes it easier to dig in the future. Turning the soil over in autumn exposes it to winter frosts and makes it easier to break down, ready for sowing the following season.

When you do need to dig, bear in mind the following:

- A border spade is lighter and easier to handle than a digging spade (see Figure 3). The blade is smaller so you won't be tempted to dig large spadefuls.
- Soil tends to cling to ordinary carbon steel spades, which adds weight, so stainless steel is a better choice. It's also easier to clean afterwards.
- Spades with extra-long handles make it easier to move the soil and reduce the need to bend.
- If your soil is light and crumbly, use a border fork instead of a spade – it's lighter and moves through the soil more easily.
- Clamping an extra handle part-way down the shaft of your spade or fork saves bending too far and provides a comfortable grip for your lower hand without twisting your wrist.

If the soil is light and sandy, you may not need to dig at all. A soil miller is a tool with star-shaped wheels that break down the soil into fine particles as you move it backwards and forwards (see Figure 4). Well-rotted farmyard manure spread over the surface can be mixed into the soil with the soil miller. This is a good tool for use with a deep-bed system.

Figure 3. A border spade is lighter and easier to handle.



Figure 4. A soil miller

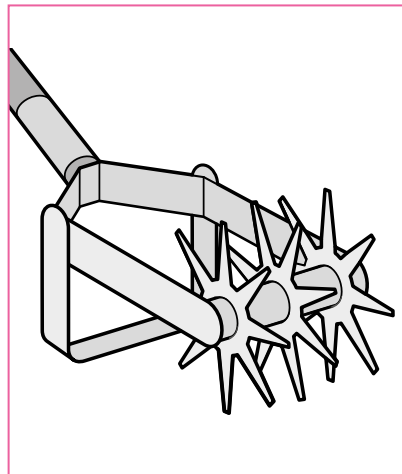
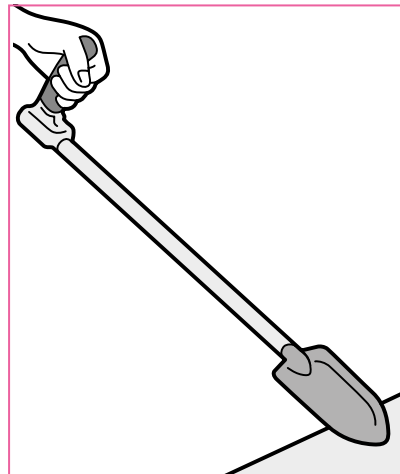


Figure 5. A long-handled trowel



Weeding

You can reduce the number of weeds you have to deal with by covering the soil with a 5 cm (2 inch) layer of shredded bark. This stops the soil getting any light and makes it more difficult for weeds to grow.

Alternatively, you can cover the bed with weed membrane, such as a sheet of black polythene, cut slits into the sheet and plant seeds through the holes. Scatter a layer of gravel over the top to hold down the polythene and improve the border's appearance.

On an uncovered bed or border annual weeds should be hoed while they're young and easy to deal with. A push-pull hoe skims the soil surface back and forth, chopping off the weeds at ground level with minimum effort. You can fit the hoe with an extra-long handle if you need to.

Weeding by hand is tiring if you can't easily reach down to ground level, but you can try using a weed puller instead. A weed puller has a steel blade that is pushed into the ground alongside the weed. Closing the handle grips the weed and pulls it out. Although this only deals with one weed at a time, it saves raking together and picking the weeds up afterwards. It's also easy to use sitting down.

Sowing seeds

Tools are available to help with sowing seeds if you have trouble bending down to ground level. The loaded tool is pushed along the drill, emptying seed as it goes along. This may not be suitable for sowing peas or beans, but you can sow these by dropping them into the trench down a length of plastic pipe. Use a lightweight mini-rake to draw a shallow layer of soil over the trench to cover the seeds. You can also buy or make your own 'seed tapes', which are strips of soft paper with seeds attached at even spaces. You can lay these into a shallow trench and cover them over with soil. If you add a weight such as a stone this should stop them being dragged away by birds.

Planting out

Planting out summer bedding plants is another job that involves a lot of bending. You can avoid this by only growing shrubs and herbaceous perennials. Alternatively, you can dig a hole using a long-handled trowel (see Figure 5), put the plant on the blade and lower it into the soil. You can do this sitting down if it's easier. Pot-grown plants are the most suitable for this method.

Watering the plants

Ideally a mains water supply should be laid to a central point so that you can water any part of the garden using a short length of hosepipe or sprinkler. Carrying water in cans and buckets is very tiring and puts a lot of strain on your hands. Instead of filling a large can from a tap and carrying it to the bottom of the garden, place water butts where you need them most. You can fill them from time to time with a hosepipe if you need to, and dip a small watering can into the tanks when you need to water the plants. When carrying and using a watering can, use both hands in order to distribute the weight. Alternatively, you can attach a small length of hose to an

outside tap if you have one. Good ground cover, mulch and drought-resistant plants can reduce the amount you will need to water.

If you have free-draining borders that are in full sun, it's best to use them for growing drought-resistant plants such as wallflowers, rosemary, broom and cotton lavender, which come to no harm if they dry out for a few days. This will help reduce the amount of watering you need to do. Mulching with shredded bark reduces water loss, but the mulch should only be applied to soil that's already damp.

Hanging baskets keep their moisture longer in light shade, and plants like fuchsias, ivy-leaved geraniums, lobelias and busy Lizzies thrive in these conditions. A hanging basket sprayer is useful for watering a basket that's too high to reach with a watering can. You can buy special hanging basket compost with crystals that help keep moisture in so you don't have to water so often. Crystals are also available for mixing in with standard compost.

Pruning

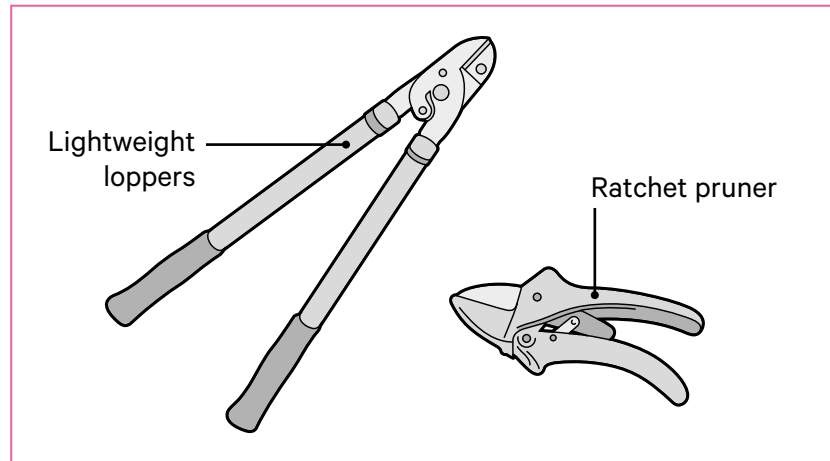
Gripping and squeezing of pruning tools over a length of time can increase pain in thumb and finger joints, so have regular breaks or spells of doing other jobs. Try to use tools with padded handles or use padded gardening gloves for cushioning and protection. The following tools may make things a little easier:

A ratchet pruner takes less effort to cut through twigs than most secateurs. Instead of one big squeeze it takes several bites to make the cut, reducing strain on your knuckles (see Figure 6).

A two-handed lopper will give good leverage without much effort and can be held lightly against the palms and wrists, protecting the finger joints from strain. Some manufacturers also produce 'ratchet loppers' – these have a ratchet mechanism which will hold the blades in place if you need to stop mid-cut.



Figure 6. Pruning



Pruners, loppers and secateurs with a cut-and-hold action hold the cut stem in their jaws so it doesn't fall to the ground, which saves you bending to pick up the cuttings (see Figure 7).

English trimming shears can be used for light trimming after the flowering of heathers and lavender. You don't need to move your fingers much to squeeze the blades together, and you can use them one-handed.

Mowing and clipping

Lightweight lawnmowers with easy-to-push buttons could be the best option if you have arthritis. Look for one with a single horizontal and large-grip handlebar, rather than two separate handles. This would let you do some of the pushing with your stomach to reduce strain on your arms and wrists.

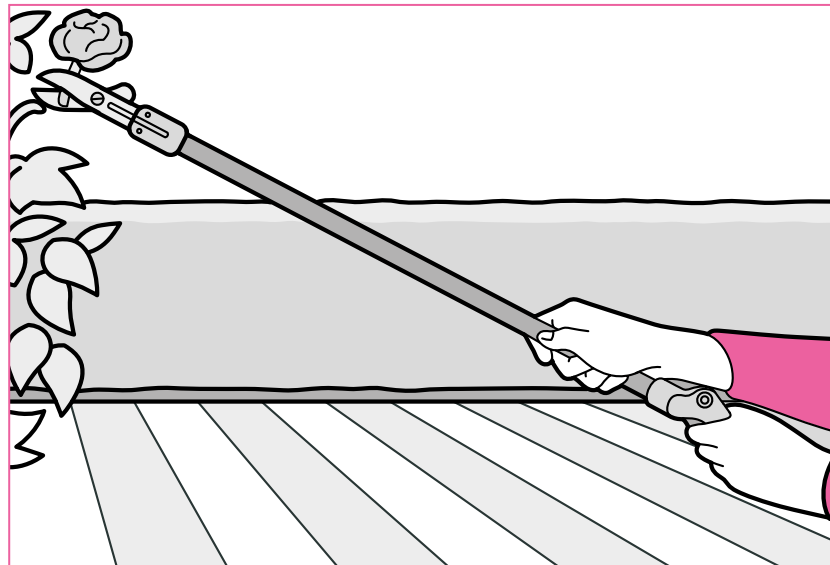
Many electric models are fairly light. Cordless battery-operated mowers are also available. These can be easier to move around as you don't have to keep moving a cable, but some models do have heavy batteries. Petrol-engine mowers are often heavy to move and manage.

If you have a large garden, a ride-on mower might be an option. Robotic mowers have improved in recent years and although expensive they do get good reviews.

You don't have to collect grass cuttings – in dry weather especially it's better to leave them on the lawn – so you can reduce the weight you have to push by leaving off the grass box.

Lightweight edging shears with long handles that are generously padded will give a more comfortable grip and reduce jarring of the joints. Or you could use a nylon cord trimmer that operates vertically – you simply walk along holding it against the edge of the lawn.

Figure 7. A flower gatherer



Keeping the garden tidy

A rake can be fitted with a smaller head for raking between plants in the border. You can collect small amounts of weeds, leaves and so on in a bucket or bag. There are tools available to help pick up garden rubbish without bending.

If you have a large garden, you may need a wheelbarrow. A barrow with two wheels and a bar-type handle can be helpful. The weight of the contents rests mainly on the axle rather than on your arms. This type of barrow is more stable and easier to empty without bending down or twisting.

What if I don't have a garden?

If you don't have a garden, is there a chance for you to have a mini-garden in your home or on a balcony? This could be a tray of plants, fruits or vegetables.

Does a friend or relative have a garden or allotment you could help with? In some parts of the country you might be able to rent an allotment plot.

The National Allotment Society has a webpage advertising allotment plots that can be rented. www.nsalg.org.uk/about-us/vacancies/

And they also have a webpage with advice on how to get an allotment. www.nsalg.org.uk/allotment-info/how-to-get-an-allotment/

Happy gardening!

The mental and physical benefits of gardening in the fresh air if you have arthritis are clear. Hopefully you'll have found some tips that can help you continue to garden without putting pressure on your joints. Pacing yourself, taking your time and not trying to do too much can really help. And so can getting the right lightweight equipment.





PENNY'S TOP TIPS

1. Invest in good hand supports

I wear supports designed by a specialist on both hands. They hold the thumb in its natural position to take the pressure off. It really does make a difference. I wouldn't be able to garden without those. I wear a thin glove over the top. If I am doing anything like strimming, which vibrates I wear thicker leather gloves to take the vibration.

2. Mix up the jobs

If I am doing some work with secateurs, I stop after a bit and I do some hoeing, and then I stop and do some digging, and then I stop and do some raking. This is so that I am not doing the same repetitive action hours on end. That seems to minimise the pressure on joints. I would not do one activity for more than an hour, perhaps for some people it might need to be 20 minutes max on one job and that's fine.

3. It's OK to get help

It's OK to get professional help for the repetitive and heavy work to leave time for the nicer and more enjoyable aspects of gardening.

4. Get some good ergonomic equipment

I have ergonomic, lightweight equipment such as hand trowels with special handles to take the pressure off the thumb joints. This avoids extra pressure on the joint. It blocks the impact. I also have lightweight aluminium spades and forks. I spent quite a bit of money on my secateurs, they cut very easily compared to some secateurs.

5. Don't overdo it

I try to recognise if something is too much. I might look at a job and say 'no, I can't do it'. This means I stop myself hurting or damaging my joints.

6. Take painkillers before the pain gets bad

I always have paracetamol tablets with me as well as ibuprofen gel. I act before it gets bad. If I feel it coming on, I take the painkillers. If I realise I have slightly over done it, when I stop for lunch, I take some.

7. Have a relaxing routine after a day's work

The minute I get home, I have a hot bath. And then I rub hand cream into my hands and into my joints. This is as much about massaging the joints.



Useful addresses

The following organisations can also help with information and advice:

Thrive

Thrive is a charity that promotes the benefits of gardening for people's health. It has been using social therapeutic horticulture and gardening to change people's lives since 1979.

Tel: 0118 988 5688

Email: info@thrive.org.uk

www.thrive.org.uk

Royal College of Occupational Therapists

Occupational therapists aim to improve the ability of people to do everyday tasks if they're having difficulties as a result of a condition such as arthritis.

Tel: 020 3141 4600

Email: hello@rcot.co.uk

www.rcot.co.uk

To find an occupational therapist near you visit **rcotss-ip.org.uk**



Where can I find out more?

If you've found this information useful, you might be interested in other titles from our range. You can download all of our booklets from our website www.versusarthritis.org or order them by contacting our Helpline. If you wish to order by post, please see our address below.

Bulk orders

For bulk orders, please contact our warehouse, APS, directly to place an order:

Phone: 0800 515 209

Email: info@versusarthritis.org

Tell us what you think

All of our information is created with you in mind. And we want to know if we are getting it right. If you have any thoughts or suggestions on how we could improve our information, we would love to hear from you. Please send your views to

bookletfeedback@versusarthritis.org

or write to us at the following address:

**Versus Arthritis, Copeman House, St Mary's Court,
St Mary's Gate, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 7TD.**

Thank you!

We would like to thank the team of people who helped us create this booklet. The original text was written by Tim Spurgeon and was revised by our friends and colleagues at Thrive. It was reviewed by Rachael Murphy, Penny Stevens and Jacqueline Pemberton.

Talk to us

Helpline

You don't need to face arthritis alone. Our advisors aim to bring all of the information and advice about arthritis into one place to provide tailored support for you.

Helpline: 0800 5200 520

Email: helpline@versusarthritis.org

Our offices

We have offices in each country of the UK. Please get in touch to find out what services and support we offer in your area:

England

Tel: 0300 790 0400

Email: enquiries@versusarthritis.org

Scotland

Tel: 0141 954 7776

Email: scotland@versusarthritis.org

Northern Ireland

Tel: 028 9078 2940

Email: nireland@versusarthritis.org

Wales

Tel: 0800 756 3970

Email: cymru@versusarthritis.org

Gardening and arthritis

This booklet has information and advice to help people with arthritis continue to enjoy the physical and mental benefits of gardening.

For information please visit our website:

versusarthritis.org

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