

# MAKING IT EASY

Can't get down on your hands and knees to garden? Guess you'll have to give it up, right? Wrong! Gardening is one of the easiest activities to adapt to your needs. More and more, gardening is getting away from the large, ground-level plot with long single rows to weed. Square-foot gardening, raised beds, and container growing are fast becoming popular among many gardeners, non-disabled as well as disabled. The single most important adaptation to

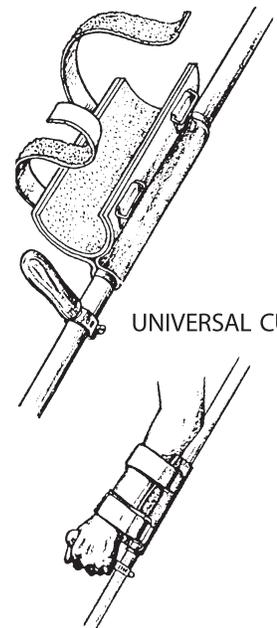


gardening for the physically limited is raising the soil level to a comfortable working level. This can be done by:

- Raised beds
- Containers
- Adaptive tools

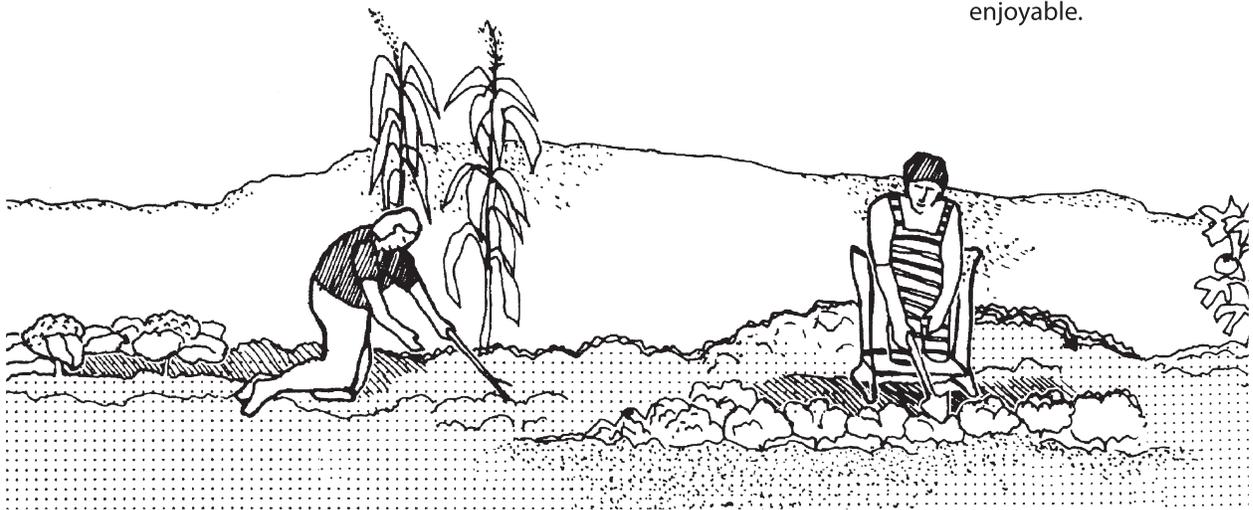
The garden area must be safe and easy to negotiate or gardeners will avoid going out. Rampways

must be at the proper incline. Paths should be of material that is easy for foot traffic, canes, walkers, or wheelchairs. Other necessary adaptations depend on the abilities of the individual gardener, recognizing limitations and working around them. The following is a list of ideas for making gardening a pleasurable experience for physically-challenged and/or senior gardeners.



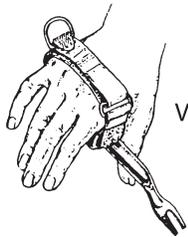
UNIVERSAL CUFF

- **KEEP IN MIND:** All tools should be durable and lightweight. Tool shed should be easily accessible and tools easy to reach. Locate garden as near to a water supply as possible. Place rest stops around your garden. Don't let the garden be too big to handle. Keep it enjoyable.



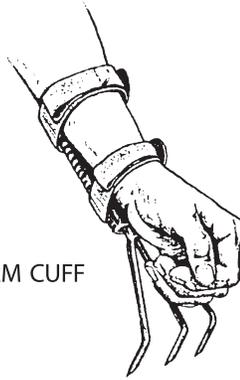
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- **LIMITED BENDING:** Adapt long-handled tools with a special handle attachment. These are easily transferable and help reduce back and arm strain. Wheelbarrows and carts should be close to the ground and built with two wheels or more rather than a single wheel. *Kneeling aids:* Seniors frequently require support aids when lowering or raising themselves. A stool with handles on each side is a great asset; soft kneeling cushions are important. Use raised beds or container gardening where possible.



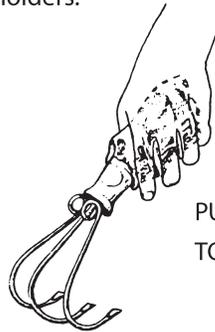
VELCRO TOOL HOLDER

- **NO USE OF HANDS:** Head wands (use with containers or raised beds) – attach a small tool to the wand for weeding, planting or pruning in very loose soil. Use the feet and toes (ground-level garden) or small-handled, lightweight tools (children’s tools) strapped with Velcro to hold the tool to the foot.



FOREARM CUFF

- **WEAK GRIP:** Putty on the handles molds to shape to your hands. Attach pipe insulation or foam rubber around the handle. Use wrist splints, and make Velcro tool holders.



PUTTY MOLDED TO HANDLE

- **USE OF ONLY ONE HAND:** Tools with long handles should be adapted by attaching an arm strap to hold the tool handle to the forearm. A hand grip should be added to provide leverage.

- **SIGHT LIMITATIONS:** Apply yellow paint or tape to tool handles. A rope with knots at proper intervals aids in planting seeds. An automatic seeder that is handheld is also helpful. Special tags may be acquired to help the visually impaired identify rows of vegetables.

HAND-HELD AUTOMATIC SEEDER



- **WHEELCHAIR USERS:** Make or purchase shortened handles on rakes and hoes for use in raised gardens, extended handles on trowels, weed pullers, scissors, etc., if being used on ground-level beds.

