

# Tips for Gardening

WITH EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING DIFFERENCES

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## 1 Start Small

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Begin with a manageable garden area or even just one or two potted plants to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Start with one type of plant and add more as you start to feel your confidence grow.

## 2 Use Visual Aids

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Label your plants (used popsicle sticks work great!), create visual schedules or reminders for gardening tasks such as checking soil moisture, store your gardening tools and items in one, easy to get to location.

## 3 Break Tasks Into Steps

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Divide gardening tasks into smaller, manageable steps to enhance focus and productivity. Knowing step one will always be to check the soil moisture will prevent overwhelm. Write down the necessary tasks on an index card and keep it with your gardening supplies/tools.

## 4 Establish Routines

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To provide structure and consistency, while reducing decision-making stress, add an observation habit to one of your existing habits. For example, during my morning routine of making coffee and letting the dog out, I added walking around my yard to observe my plants. Now, it's just another part of my morning routine and the only mental energy I exert is if I notice a plant that needs attention.

## 5 Practice Patience

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Gardening is a journey, not a race. Embrace mistakes as learning opportunities, experiment often and celebrate progress along the way.

## 6 Use Your Senses

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The best part about gardening is the physical act of it. Paying attention to smells, feels and looks will bring a deeper connection to nature as well as ground your mind and thoughts.