



## LIMBOROUGH FOOD HUB



# GARDEN TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

**MAKE SURE THAT YOU WEAR GLOVES EVERY TIME YOU WORK WITH SHARP OBJECTS AND ALWAYS WASH YOUR HANDS AFTER CLEANING YOUR TOOLS!**

1. TOOL MAINTENANCE
2. STORAGE
3. WINTER PREPARATIONS

Commonly used garden tools are

### Working with soil

- Fork
- Spade
- Shovel
- Hoe
- Trowel
- Garden dibber

### Cutting and chopping

- Secateurs or garden shears
- Loopers
- Saw
- Lawn mower

### Other equipments

- Watering can or hose
- Robes, wires and clips
- Wheelbarrow
- Gardening gloves

It's worth taking the effort and getting into the habit of collecting your tools at the end of your activity, cleaning them and putting them away until their next use. Doing so makes them last longer and in better working order but also will keep you and your plants safe and healthy. Dirty, rusty tools can spread bacteria and diseases from plant to plant and can destroy the result of your hard work.

### YOU'LL NEED

- wire wool or brushes - The best one has a wooden handle with a chisel-like end to scrape off dried-on soil.
- clean cloths, old t-shirts and towels are perfect for the job
- linseed oil
- water
- Occasionally – fine sandpaper

## 1, TOOL MAINTENANCE

**Wipe your garden tools clean after every use.** Even so, every now and again, wash off any dirt with soapy water which helps to spruce them up and even get rid of pests, fungal infections and diseases. If you can at least brush off the dirt before storing them, that would make a difference.

### How to clean hand tools?

- Use a stiff scrubbing brush to remove any soil from the blade and shaft.
- Extremely muddy tools may need a wash down with a hose before drying with an old towel. Drying prevents wooden handles from absorbing water and swelling and metal from rusting

- Traditionally after cleaning, tools were oiled with a thin protective film of general-purpose oil, to help prevent rusting. It is fine to do it once a year in spring and occasionally if a handle seems to be dry.

### **What Oil is Best for Garden Tools?**

Linseed oil is the best choice for gardening tools. It's nice and light, won't become sticky and provides a protective barrier on both the metal and wooden parts as prevents moisture and dirt from penetrating the material. Humidity can damage metal making it rusty and wood causing it to break down, get mildew, splinter etc. Oil will also prevent the wood from drying out.

You should clean the wood handles first then the metal part then you can coat them with linseed oil. If you already have rust on your gardening tools, you can use vegetable oil to wipe them. This should lift the rust off the metal and prevent it from forming again. It is a good idea to make sure that you remove rust as soon as it forms so that it is a simpler project.

### **Quick repairs and sharpening**

If you are pruning, mowing, or even sawing, the blades will eventually be blunt which will make your job harder and if you can't make a clean cut you might damage your plant. If you are familiar with sharpening you can do it yourself but it is ok to find a service and have your tools sharpened professionally when needed.

When you prune the sap of the plants attracts grime to the blade. This builds up and causes blades to stick together over time. Clean off dried-on sap with wire wool then use penetrating oil or WD-40 to help loosen the grime. Once the metal is clear and smooth, wipe off the remaining liquid. Tighten any loose working parts and drop some oil into the central pivot point, opening and closing it to work the oil in.



## **2, STORAGE**

When you're finished, you want to make sure you store your tools properly in a dry, covered area of easy access. Make sure they aren't stored with their working part down or on the floor that might be wet because they get deformed and might be a source of a safety hazard.

The pictures give you an idea of safe and clean storage options.



1. brush off soil
2. use a disinfectant to kill off diseases
3. sand and oil wooden handles
4. tighten up loose bolts
5. allow tools to dry before storing
6. hang your tools or lay them rather than standing them. You can keep them in an outside shed or even a wooden bench.
7. give each tool its own space, If you space them apart to allow for air circulation.

Suggestions for the workshop and later garden management activities

Provide at the end of each sessions

table or basket but at least a dedicated area for collecting garden tools

Few brushes and cloths

first aid kit – plasters, desinfectants etc.

When identifying the garden coordinator, that will be their job to put away everything (counting, checking etc.) so we can start putting together a job description

Garden tools tend to disappear

every month – a cleaning session

Idea

We purchase some paper folders, will print a list of the workshops as table of contents – participants get their copy and can keep it filed. At the end of the year they will have their own gardening book that contains every information we covered during the year.