

South Austin Community Garden Gardening Guidelines

Participation & Community Hours: Community gardens are all about having a community of gardeners, so gardeners' active participation in the garden is required. Gardeners who fail to maintain their plants, plots, and adjacent pathways will be notified and may forfeit their plots. Gardeners who have special circumstances or are away from the garden for extended periods due to vacations, etc., are encouraged to reach out to other gardeners for assistance using the garden Yahoo Group or other means. In most cases, other gardeners can help out or will work to come up with a solution.

One community hour per full plot or half plot is required each month to stay in good standing. Community hours are defined as the time gardeners spend to maintain and develop common areas for the benefit of the entire community garden. Time spent maintaining a gardener's own plot and adjacent pathways are not considered community hours. Examples of community hours include mowing and weeding the common areas, compost pile building, maintaining community garden equipment, and time served as community garden coordinators. Assisting other gardeners with their community hours is allowed and can be privately negotiated between gardeners. Gardeners who *fall six hours behind on a full plot or a half plot in their community hours* will be notified and have the following options: (1) to make up their hours within one month, (2) to pay a delinquent fee of \$15 per hour, or (3) to select a combination of the first two options. Otherwise, after their plot is discussed and voted on at the next monthly meeting, notice will be given to the gardener and the plot will be forfeited and reassigned.

The community garden holds a monthly business meeting & potluck supper at the Denizen Condos clubhouse on the third Wednesday of each month. *Visitors are welcome.* Gardeners are encouraged to attend because every gardener's input adds to the success of the garden community; furthermore, many community garden issues are discussed and voted on at the monthly meetings.

Group community garden workdays are usually held the Saturday morning following the monthly meetings. *Visitors are welcome.* Gardeners are encouraged to perform their community hours at the workdays; however, those who cannot attend can check for a list of tasks posted in the garden shed or on the garden Yahoo Group, or they can contact garden coordinators for suggestions. Gardeners are required to record their monthly community hours on a monthly basis.

Gardeners are encouraged to join the garden's Yahoo Group at <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/SACGarden> because it is the primary method of communication for most gardeners.

Gardening Methods: The SACG is an organic garden. No synthetic/chemical herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, or synthetic fertilizers are permitted on the site. Treated wood products are not allowed.

Plot Maintenance: The regular maintenance of a gardener's own plot is required. Time spent maintaining one's own plot is not considered community hours; however, time spent cleaning plots that are being reassigned is considered to be community hours. Diseased, pest-infested, and dead plants should be promptly removed. Ongoing control is required of pest grasses and weeds that can spread into neighboring plots through seed dispersal. Trees and large shrubs/perennial plants are not allowed. Trellises or other tall structures that block sunlight to neighboring plots are not allowed.

Pathway Maintenance: Pathways between plots must be kept clear. Personal gardening supplies, tools, and equipment should be stored in a gardener's plot or in the SACG shed, not in the garden pathways. Vegetation from plots should not hang into pathways. Gardeners are required to maintain the pathways immediately adjacent to and around their plots, including weeding and mulching. Time spent on adjacent pathway maintenance is not considered community hours.

Tools & Equipment: Gardeners are required to maintain and clean community garden tools and equipment after each use. All tools and equipment should be returned to the garden shed and left in an orderly manner. Gardeners who break tools and equipment through negligence are responsible for their replacement. Gardeners' personal tools and equipment may be stored in the shed and should be labeled to avoid confusion. Please remember to check and lock the tool shed before leaving the garden.

Watering/Hoses: Water is the community garden's largest expense and an important resource that gardeners are requested to use reasonably. Each gardener is responsible for checking and turning off garden hoses before leaving the garden. Instructions on using the community garden's water irrigation system are posted at http://www.main.org/sacgarden/SACG_water.pdf.

When using community garden hoses, please take care not to damage other gardens, and when finished, untangle and neatly coil hoses next to the water faucets. If gardeners use a drip hose and wish to leave but keep the water on, they should leave a note at the hose faucet indicating the gardener's name, plot number, and the date and hour the gardener plans to return to turn off the hose. All drip hoses should be in good repair in order to conserve water and function properly. Overnight watering is not permitted. If a gardener fails to comply with the watering rules, the gardener will be notified and may forfeit their plot.

Pets/Children/Guests: Pets, children, and guests are welcome. Pets and children should be under adult/gardener supervision at all times while in the garden and kept out of garden plots. Please clean up after your pets. Each gardener is responsible for their pets/children/guests.

Compost: There are three compost bins at the garden for general use as well as a separate compost bin for weeds only. Compost guidelines are posted next to the three general use compost bins and at http://www.main.org/sacgarden/SACG_composting.pdf.

All gardeners are expected to help maintain the compost piles. Garden compost is for all gardeners to use, when it is available. Please be reasonable in the amount of compost taken for personal use.

Trash: The community garden does not have trash service. Gardeners and their visitors who pack in trash should pack it out, just like good campers. Please do not put trash in the compost bins.

Garden Gates & Locks: Each gardener is responsible for checking and locking the garden gates when entering and before leaving the garden. Please spin the locks after unlocking them (best practice) and be sure to spin the locks before leaving the garden so the combination is not left showing on the locks. Please do not share the garden gate lock combination codes with non-gardeners. Denizen Condo office staffers have been provided the garden gate lock combination to allow them to conduct garden area maintenance for the foreseeable future.

Each gardener is responsible for checking and locking the garden tool shed before leaving the garden. The garden tool shed lock combination is different than the gate lock combination and is for gardeners' use only. Please do not share the combination code with non-gardeners.

Garden Operating System: The community garden primarily operates on the honor system and the Golden Rule: to treat others as you'd like others to treat you. A handful of garden coordinators, who volunteer their time and energy, help to keep the community garden running smoothly. Gardeners interested in rewarding volunteer opportunities can read about these coordinator positions at http://www.main.org/sacgarden/SACG_work_co.pdf.

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