

I'm very excited about the new look of the "What's Up Section." I hope you like it too. Every week you'll find me on this very same page, in this very same spot. Just like one of your favorite plants.

Speaking of favorite plants this is the time of year to get out there and share some of your hard-earned money with our local nurseries. We are so lucky to live here in Kitsap County. I couldn't pick a favorite nursery if my life depended on it. So get your checkbooks, drive to your favorite nursery and take advantage of all the sales going on locally. That's what my husband Pat and I are going to do.

The best thing about buying plants this time of year is our friend Mother Nature will do most of the watering for us. But do water each plant thoroughly before taking it out of its nursery container. Before unpotting the plant, dig the hole for planting. Fill the hole with water and let it soak in. If the water remains after twenty minutes, only plant a water loving plant there. Otherwise remove your plant from its container, loosen up it's roots (sometimes you have to really slice the compacted roots with a sharp tool) and then plant away making sure the potting soil is level with your garden soil. Finish by backfilling (putting the rest of the soil you dug in the hole) and water again. Until the monsoons come, your plant will need one inch of water a week.

I've been checking out some websites you'll want to visit to learn more about plant choices, care and lore. The WSU horticulture information site is [gardening.wsu.edu](http://gardening.wsu.edu). One of my favorite extension agents and columnists is Mary Robson. At this site you can access several years of her weekly horticulture advise. You'll find an answer to every question you could imagine about gardening. This WSU site features information about composting, lawncare, vegetables, pruning, insects, and diseases. You name it, this site has the answers. It will be as if you had your own personal master gardener in your computer room.

This is also the perfect time of year to plant woody herbs. Through my Gardening Mentor business I recently visited a client who loves lavender and herbs. Her garden was delightful and she invited me in for a cup of tea and homemade lavender bread and sent me home with delectable lavender flavored bread. (I think it's all right to tell you her name was Denise May.) I keyed in the word "lavender" using the search engine [google.com](http://google.com) and the first website to pop up was Purple Haze in Sequim. You'll want to visit this site too; it's [www.purplehazelavender.com](http://www.purplehazelavender.com). The site explains how to plant, maintain and prune lavender and has recipes and a veritable bouquet of lavender lore and information. Make sure you hop in your car some Saturday or Sunday afternoon to go visit the Purple Haze Lavender Farm owned and operated by Jadyne and Mike Reichner.

Native plants are perfect for our gardens. They're the original Pacific Northwest waterwise plants. They not only thrive in our very dry summers but also absolutely flourish in our very damp and rainy winters and springs. To learn more about native plants visit [www.wnps.org](http://www.wnps.org). The [gardening.wsu.edu](http://gardening.wsu.edu) site has excellent information about native plants too.

For tips on pruning old or new plants visit [plantamnesty.org](http://plantamnesty.org). This is the site for Plant Amnesty founded by Cass Turnbull in Seattle. Most of the information on this site is absolutely free, but Plant Amnesty will gladly accept donations. It's free to search their archives and print out pruning tip sheets. This is probably the best site on pruning for us northwest gardeners. Visit the library though and check out Rodale's successful organic gardening book: "Pruning" by Kris Medic. Try this book, you might need to add it to your home library.

We'll end with one announcement. Compost tea is a good thing to do for your plants and shrubs. The master gardeners at the Northwest College of Arts Demonstration Garden have compost tea for sale for two dollars on Saturday, October 13, at 9 a.m. They'll give you a sheet giving directions on how to use this delicious soup for your soil. (You won't want to sip this soup, but your soil and plants will.) The NW College of Arts entry is on Highway 305 near Milepost 9 (across from the George Fireworks Stand).

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