



Brown Your Green Thumb This Spring With Free Gardening Classes

by Emily Steele
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Brush off the trowel and get ready for spring with [University of Illinois Extension's](#) Four Seasons Gardening series starting in March.

Four Seasons Gardening is one of Illinois Extension's most popular gardening series that has been offered since 2014. Each season, horticulture experts cover a variety of environmental stewardship, home gardening, and backyard food production topics in free one-hour webinars.

"We choose topics based on what home gardeners are calling and emailing us about," says Extension Horticulture Educator Gemini Bhalsod. "We want to give them the skills and tools they need to be successful whether they're new or experienced gardeners."

The spring 2021 sessions will cover growing herbs for a variety of uses, how to identify common Midwestern insects, and how to add living borders to landscapes.

Growing and Using Herbs at 1:30 p.m. on March 23 will explore how herbs have been used throughout history as flavorings, medicines, decorations, scents, and protective garden plants. Horticulture Educator [Nancy Kreith](#) will demonstrate how to successfully grow herbs for ornamental and wildlife value, culinary use, or craft projects.

What's That Bug? How to Identify Insects at 1:30 p.m. on April 27 will give gardeners the tools they need to identify insects and understand their important role in ecosystems. Horticulture Educator and insect enthusiast [Ken Johnson](#) will explore how to identify different groups of insects commonly found in Illinois.

Green Screens, Fences, and Borders at 1:30 p.m. on May 11 will explore how to add living walls, screens, and fencing using evergreens and perennial shrubs for added privacy in outdoor spaces. Horticulture Educator [Austin Little](#) will explore design

elements and species suggestions for adding structural elements to landscapes of all sizes.

The webinars are free, but registration is required one week before the session. Sign up for one or all three sessions online at go.illinois.edu/FourSeasons. After registering, participants will receive an email with access information. Participants who are unable to attend the live session can still register for access to the recorded program.

If you would like to attend the webinars at one of our offices, please call (618) 939-3434 to attend in Waterloo or (618) 344-4230 to attend in Collinsville.

University of Illinois Extension provides [equal opportunities](#) in programs and employment. If you need [reasonable accommodation](#) to participate in any of these programs, please contact the educator leading the session. Their contact information is available at go.illinois.edu/FourSeasons. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time for meeting your access needs.

Extension horticulture educators help home gardeners across Illinois find and apply sound management practices on topics from lawn care to growing backyard produce and everything in between.

ABOUT EXTENSION: Illinois Extension leads public outreach for University of Illinois by translating research into action plans that allow Illinois families, businesses, and community leaders to solve problems, make informed decisions, and adapt to changes and opportunities.