



# NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

## Gifts and Gadgets for Gardeners (November 23, 2024)

By Sharon Plein, Tulare/Kings Counties Master Gardener

Are you looking for a gift for your favorite gardening enthusiast? Avid gardeners love to receive gifts that aim to make their gardening chores a little easier and more fun! Here are ten items for even those that seem to have everything.

**1. Gauntlets.** Gauntlets are gloves or over-the-glove sleeves that can extend up to the elbow. They can be made from leather or even heavy canvas. Anybody who has pruned rose bushes or thorny plant growth can appreciate the protection they provide. There are also thin, stretchy ones for summer work that help avoid sunburn or the need for SPF lotion.



**2. Hori Hori.** It is not a disease! It is a Japanese gardening tool. Translated into English, Hori means "to dig", and since it is repeated twice, you can bet that it is a workhorse of a tool. A Hori Hori is a heavyweight, pointed, concave blade that is serrated on one side and has a sharpened edge on the other. This tool can cut through roots and compacted soil.

It comes with a protective sheath for storage when it is not being used.

**3. Collapsible trash container.** There are many sizes and varieties of collapsible trash containers. They are held together in a collapsed state by a set of toggles that makes the container easy to store when empty and easier to use than a heavy plastic or metal garbage can. The only problem with these "spring loaded" containers is that the toggles can pull apart, or the fabric can tear, exposing the spiral coil. The torn fabric, however, can be covered with strong tape, like electrical tape, to prevent the band from exposing the metal end of the coil.

**4. Collapsible hose.** Any gardener who has lugged around a length of heavy rubber hose can appreciate the convenience of a lightweight, collapsible hose that can be easily stored and carried. Collapsible hoses have improved quite a bit since they were first marketed. The old styles had a thinner rubber lining that could pop like a balloon under water pressure. Thankfully, new versions have both a more durable lining and hose bib attachment. They do come with a couple of caveats: Do not store the hose without draining the water. Since it is made of rubber tubing with an outer covering of fabric, it is best to store it out of the sun.

**5. Long handled dustbins.** These items come in handy for transferring garden waste into another container without bending over. The best ones have a replaceable tip that eliminates the gap under the bin for a clean sweep on the pavement.

**6. Nejiri Kama Garden Hoe.** This is another great Japanese tool with a sharp edge that comes to a point. It does everything a small sharp hoe can do, plus the sharp point at the end of the blade is great for removing weeds growing in pavement cracks. It comes with a 13- or 18-inch handle and is available in right- or left-handed versions. Due to its sharp edge and point, this hand hoe also comes with a protective sheath for storage.

**7. Folding pruning saw.** Folding pruning saws come in a variety of sizes. Sometimes, pruning shears meet their match when branch diameters are too large or too hard. That's when a folding saw saves another trip to the garage for yet another tool. An extra benefit is that the biting teeth of the blade fold down toward the handle.

**8. Edge sharpener.** Who knew that such an indispensable gardening gift could be so inexpensive and portable? Renew the cutting edges of your tools by cleaning and then sharpening one side of the cutting edge with one upward stroke across the blade. Do not use a sawing back-and-forth action. You will notice the shiny, sharpened edge and can test it with careful touch. Now that you have sharpened your cutting edges oil the moving parts with WD 40 or other light oil.

**9. Garden gloves.** Personal preference determines the type of gardening gloves to choose. Leather gloves last the longest, but many gardeners feel that they are clumsy and do not offer tactile feedback for many gardening chores. Knitted rubber-coated gloves usually come in multi-packs, which is a clue that these gloves can wear out with repeated use and heat exposure. Buy two kinds of gloves. Use heavy gloves for heavy chores to protect the palms and tops of your hands and knitted rubber-coated gloves for lighter-duty gardening.

**10. Orange-Scented Goop Hand Cleaner.** Even if you wear gloves, your hands and fingertips can become stained from soil that sifts into your gloves through leather seams or knitted tops. If you are a "gorilla gardener" who uses the bare-hand approach for weeding or finger pruning, you will need an effective product to remove the stains that linger after repeated hand washing. This product works!

Happy Gardening Gifting!

**The Tulare-Kings Counties Master Gardeners will answer your questions in person:**

Visalia Farmer's Market, 1st & 3rd Saturdays, 8 - 11 am, Tulare Co. Courthouse

Dec. 7, 9 am – Noon, Citrus Tasting Event at Lindcove Research and Extension Center, 22963 Carson Ave. Exeter

**Questions? Call the Master Gardeners:**

Tulare County: (559) 684-3325, Tues & Thurs, 9:30-11:30.

Kings County: (559) 852-2736, Thursday Only, 9:30–11:30 am.

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