

Gardening for healthy ageing



Estimated read time: 6 minutes

Gardening can help keep you fit, mobile, and happy at any age.



[Watch the video](#) to learn about John's garden and his top tips for safe gardening.

The benefits of gardening as you age

Gardening is one of the most popular activities in Australia. It combines movement, creativity, and time outdoors, all of which can help you stay healthy as you age.

Some key benefits of gardening include:

- Staying active and improving your strength, balance, and endurance
- Reducing stress and boosting relaxation
- Building social connections
- Growing food and herbs that support a healthy diet
- Boosting creativity and brain health

How gardening supports positive ageing

According to a 2020 review in *BMJ Open*, gardening supports many aspects of your health. These benefits work together to help you **age your way**:

- **Mental health:** Tending to the garden calms your nervous system. It helps you manage emotions, reduce stress, and build self-esteem.
- **Physical health:** Activities like digging, watering, and pruning count as daily exercise.

- **Social life:** Community gardens and clubs help you connect with others. You can learn new skills and feel supported.
- **Brain health:** Designing and caring for a garden is a purposeful activity. It gets you thinking creatively, which is good for your brain. Reducing stress, staying active, and connecting with others also help protect your brain and memory over time.

Tips for gardening safely as you age

LiveUp's allied health professionals recommend these simple ways to stay safe while gardening:

- Wear sunscreen, a hat, gloves, and supportive footwear.
- Garden in the morning or late afternoon to avoid heat.
- Keep a chair and water bottle nearby and take regular breaks to drink water.
- Change positions regularly and avoid kneeling or bending for too long.
- Clear walkways of hazards and ensure they're even and non-slip.
- Stretch before and after gardening to prevent injury.

Gardening tools and products to make tasks easier

A few garden tasks may become harder with age, injury, or arthritis. Some low-risk assistive technology (AT) can help you keep gardening – with less strain.

AT might sound complicated, but it just refers to products that make everyday life simpler. Some useful gardening AT options include:

- Raised garden beds and vertical wall gardens – bring plants within easy reach
- Retractable hanging baskets – so you don't need to stretch as much
- Easy-grip or long-handled tools – reduce hand, wrist, and back strain

Looking for more ways to make gardening easier?

- Explore our [full adaptive gardening tools guide](#).
- If you prefer a quick reference, you can print our short list of [10 helpful gardening tools for older people](#).

AT with Better Homes and Gardens



[Watch this video](#) segment from Better Homes and Gardens to see some examples of practical gardening products that make tasks easier and safer.

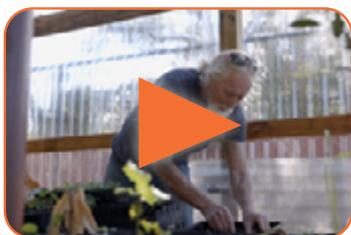
Gardening groups in Australia

Gardening groups meet regularly to:

- Maintain and cultivate local food and herb gardens
- Attend discussions, workshops, or seminars
- Help care for community native habitats
- Foster friendship and social connection

It doesn't matter if you're new to gardening or experienced. Community gardens are a welcoming way to meet people and share skills.

Brian's community garden



[Watch the video](#) to hear Brian's firsthand experience of the benefits of community gardens.

Where to find gardening groups in Australia

Two useful resources for finding gardening groups include:

- [Community Gardens Australia](#)
- [Garden Clubs of Australia](#)

Both offer advice on joining a local group and getting involved.

You can also search [LiveUp's activities database](#) to find gardening groups in your area.

Getting support

An occupational therapist (OT) can:

- Suggest tools and techniques for your needs
- Help adapt your garden tasks
- Provide strategies to protect your joints and maintain independence

Find an OT near you through [Occupational Therapy Australia](#) (OTA).

Can't find an OT in your area through OTA? You can also check Healthdirect's tool for [finding an OT by location](#).

If you need more information about healthy ageing, take the LiveUp quiz or get in touch with one of our helpful team on **1800 951 971**

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