

Compliments of



Unique Garden Centre and Landscaping



FROM THE GROUND UP 2017



Unique Garden Centre and Landscaping is proud to announce the opening of our new gift shop. Not only do we have fabulous accessories for the perfect yard but also gifts for all those special occasions. Wedding, anniversary, shower gifts, bridal party, baby and birthday gifts....we have them all and the best part is that many of them can be personalized.

Our focus is to find the perfect gift for that hard to buy for person.

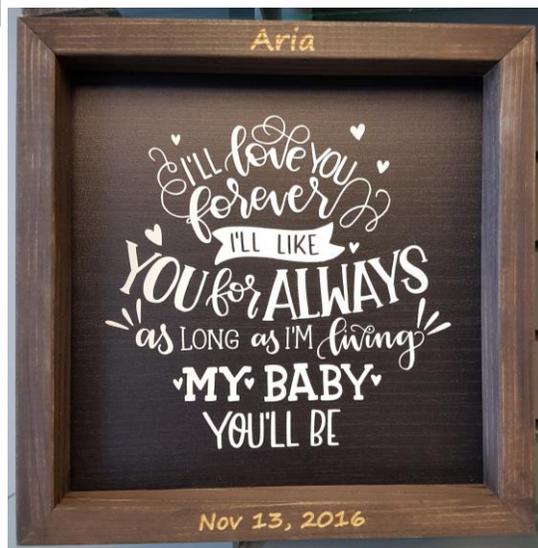
We have embroidery and laser features that can turn gifts into a "unique" keepsake that will be cherished for a lifetime. Come in and check out the beautiful granite, marble and other items that can be personalized with a photo, absolutely one of kind gifts! Also, if you or that special person loves "lake life" we carry an array of gifts for the cabin. Remember, 'tis the season to show appreciation for the loved ones in your life! Come on by Unique Gift Shop to put together a gorgeous gift baskets of your own. Fill it to the brim with gift cards, personalized items and a whole lot more!

For more information contact Deb at deb.uniquegarden@hotmail.com or drop by



Unique Gift Shop

located at 463 Broad St. North



STARTING PLANTS INDOORS

Spring still seems so far off as you pour over the seed catalogue that just arrived. After all, how hard can it be to start your own plants? Just think about the jump on spring and the fun that you will have. So roll up your sleeves and follow this advice that I got from the experts.

Things you need to know before deciding what seeds to buy.

1. The average frost free (FF) growing season in Saskatchewan is 90 days. That's the average. We have had years where we have had 110 FF days and then there have been years that as gardeners – we don't want to talk about.
2. Note the days to maturity on the seed packet, but remember that is a best case scenario. A cooler summer may mean longer maturity dates (important to know if you are starting vegetables.)

Stuff you will need.

1. A very good artificial light source. Poor light will result in tall, spindly and pale plants. Plants from seed grown by a window become impossibly sad specimens, even in the sunniest spot in your house. The sun's rays are simply too weak and the days too short for young plants to receive their gigantic daily requirement of energy.
2. Containers - must have good drainage, square or rectangular shape and about 3 inches deep to prevent soil and seedlings from drying out. Deeper containers are just a waste of soil.
3. Drip tray so that you can water from the bottom. Remember to check after 20 minutes and drain any water not absorbed.
4. Soil. Use any mix that lists peat moss (retains moisture), vermiculite and/or perlite (lightens the soil, retains air and moisture) and loam (dirt, for volume). But be sure it's a high-quality, sterile medium.
5. Fertilizer – Use a soluble fertilizer such as 20-20-20.
6. Small fan.

What to do.

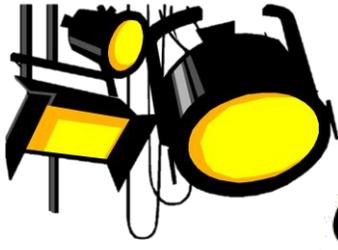
1. If this is your first time – start small. The basement usually provides better growing temperature for plants. A 4 x 4 foot area with height adjustable florescent lights is ideal for the beginner.
2. Fill your plant cells with moistened planting medium. It is important to moisten the soil before using. Test for proper moisture by taking a handful and squeezing hard. You should be able to squeeze a little out but not much. Tamp down to remove air pockets.
3. Plant two seeds per cell as per instructions on the package, mist the soil surface and cover (if a cover not provided use popsicle sticks and plastic wrap.)
4. Lower the florescent lights to about ½ an inch above the cover over the newly planted cells. Using a timer, the lights should remain on for 16 hours a day.
5. Check daily, removing the cover for 5 seconds every other day for air exchange. Light condensation on the lid is normal.
6. Remove cover no more than 3 days after the first sign of germination and raise the light to about 4” above the top of the seedling. Increase the lights to 18 hours a day and add the small fan to gently circulate the air to reduce the risk of the fungal disease “damping off” and encourage sturdy seedlings.
7. Keep the soil evenly moist – BUT NOT SOGGY. After the first 2 true leaves appear, add water soluble fertilizer to the water at the same rate as for house plants. Note: The first leaves you see are the cotyledons, the next leaves are the first true leaves.
8. After a week or two, remove the weaker of the two plants in each cell, cutting at the soil line with small scissors.
9. When you finally have some nice warm days happening and the danger of frost will soon be past, it is time to start hardening off your plants. Take them outside for the afternoon in a shady spot for a day or two, then for all day with morning sun, then as long as frost is not a worry, you are ready to plant outside.

Well, I am ready to go buy the supplies I need to start my own plants so that I too can be gardening in March.

**Is someone on your Christmas list
hard to buy for?**

**We have the solution!!
Available at Unique Gifts.
You choose the value.
Gift cards can be used
for purchases at our gift shop
or at Unique Garden Centre
(when it re-opens in the spring).**





spotlight on

Our “Spotlight On” page provides information on a different tree, shrub and perennial in each addition of “From the Ground Up”



Oriental Poppy
Papaver orientale

One of the most spectacular perennials you can choose to add to your garden. There are several colors, the most common being red. Easy to grow and require full sunlight. Large blooms on tall stalks, Oriental Poppies bloom in late spring and midsummer. The mature height is 24” and they spread 24” – 36” wide. Best of all, the poppies are hardy to zone 2.

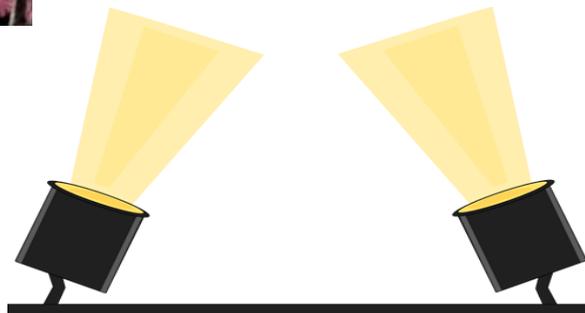
Autumn Magic Chokeberry
Aronia melanocarpa ‘Autumn Magic’

This compact deciduous shrub has glossy dark green oval leaves that turn a lovely shade of red in fall. Its white blooms in the middle of spring give way to an abundance of black berries in the late summer and fall. It adapts to either drought or excessive moisture in the soil. It prefers full sun. It grows to a height of about 4’ and spreads about 3’ wide and is hardy to zone 3.



Muckle Plum
Prunus nigrella ‘Muckle’

This wonderful spring-flowering plant is a small multi-stemmed shrub or small tree which is covered with lush blooms very early in the season. It is a wonderful addition to a small yard. It prefers full sun and well drained soil. Hardy to zone 3, it will mature to a size of 15’ tall and 10’ wide.



Winter woes:



When you think of a Canadian winter, you think of frosty temperatures and snow. Oddly enough, cold and, in many cases, even snow, aren't your garden's worst winter enemies; it's the wind and those sunny winter days we love that could kill our plants.

Wind hazards: Cold winter winds dry out the branches of exposed shrubs. Gardeners are often prepared to deal with the cold, but forget the blasts that slam into their gardens from the north and west. That is why it is often recommended to cover cedars with burlap or protect tender roses with a "tent"



Wind can even damage the roots of top-heavy plants like newly planted trees and shrubs. When it comes to these new plants, there's one stem and many branches but no major root system. All large trees should be staked, especially if planted later in the fall.

Sun: nice for us, not for our plants: A newly planted garden in direct winter sun can be at real risk. "The worst thing for plants, particularly perennials, is alternate freezing and thawing. Plants will sustain root damage from heaving and also from the standing water left behind after the snow melts.

Some trees, too, suffer from the winter sun's rays. Apples, flowering crabapples, mountain ash, some maples and ornamental cherries are the most vulnerable: One side of the tree heats up, and the frozen wood expands, then splits. Though frost cracks running down the trunk are unsightly, the wound will heal itself eventually. However, repeated occurrences will weaken the tree and it could fall over. Use tree wraps to protect vulnerable trees.



Snow problem? Snow, by itself is actually a good thing. It keeps the ground cold, protecting the roots of plants from disturbance during their winter's sleep. When it does melt in spring, snow tends to melt slowly. The ground is also thawing, so the earth can gradually absorb the water.



Of course, soil with good drainage is the key to making this natural cycle work. If you're cursed with heavy, clay soil, the snow melt could turn into an ice pack or standing water. Amend the soil with compost worked in at least 12 inches [20 cm].

Snow load is another thing to watch for: Don't pile snow on top of your nice hedge. Aim for the base of evergreens and twiggy shrubs; dumping it on top is likely to bend—and eventually break—branches.

Beware of snow load after a heavy snowfall, too. Shake off your more vulnerable plant material. Use a broom or rake to help you out.



Mulch everywhere you can. Remember all those leaves last fall? This is their purpose in life. Just like snow, shredded or rotted leaves, or broken-up bales of straw, act as an insulator and keep the ground nice and cold. As time passes, the mulch will hold in soil moisture, prevent weeds and ultimately break down into lovely loam—an added bonus.

By following the above suggestions —and with a little luck— you can look forward to a green and happy spring.

