

Tools Make Good Christmas Gifts for the Gardener



Photo by Vermont Garden Carts: A garden cart, or any of a number of other tools, can make an excellent gift for the gardener.

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Are you looking for a last minute gift for your favorite gardener? This Christmas give that special person a gift that is useful and that will add to the pleasure of gardening. Even the most casual gardener recognizes the value of a good tool. Gardeners are always looking for just the right gadget to make their task a little easier.

Garden tools range from very expensive power equipment to a simple hand trowel. In deciding what to get, consider the following. How special is this gardener? How much do you want to spend? What are that person's particular needs? How large is their garden? How much time do they spend in the garden? If you decide a power tool is the answer to your gardener's needs there are a lot of options available: mowers, tillers, chainsaws, leaf blowers, chipper/shredders, trimmers ...and the list goes on. Whatever you do, buy equipment of high quality. The wrong selection in a power tool can prove to be a very expensive mistake. So make sure you have a good idea of what the recipient would like and buy carefully

While power tools exist for just about any gardening chore you can imagine, a hand tool may often be a better choice. Certainly, if your gardener has a small yard or just a simple flower or herb bed, they will be better off with an appropriate hand tool for most tasks other than lawn care. Even then an old-fashioned push mower may be suitable. Good hand tools are relatively inexpensive, easier on the environment, quieter, and will be appreciated by all but the most gadget-oriented.

The common gardening tasks outside of lawn care are digging, preparing garden beds, planting, weeding and cultivating, pruning, and raking leaves. Good quality hand tools suitable for each of these tasks can be found in most garden centers

From my own experience, I would enjoy finding any one of the following tools under the Christmas tree: a sturdy, narrow bladed garden trowel to use in transplanting; high quality hand pruning shears (the bypass or scissor type) for trimming, shaping, and cutting flowers; or a strong long-handled garden shovel for digging and planting. Even a good pair of leather garden gloves would be welcome. These are the most often used

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tools in my shed and I could always use an extra.

A few other possibilities include a combination garden hoe and cultivator for weeding and loosening the soil, a sturdy garden rake for smoothing the planting bed and removing debris, or a wide leaf rake. For those like myself who find that time has taken a toll on their physical ability, there are a few items that will make their chores a little easier. One in particular is the “kneeler-seat”, my personal favorite. This item is available locally and through garden catalogs. It makes kneeling a lot more comfortable, and even better, makes getting back up on your feet much easier. Even a good pair of knee-pads would be appreciated. Pruning shears with special grips are available for those with arthritic hands. A tool caddy which also serves as a seat could ease the gardener’s work. There are many more ideas than I can mention here.

Most gardeners could use a garden cart of some type to haul dirt, plants, garden trash, fire wood and the many other materials they will be using around their home. Make sure you match the weight and capacity of the cart to the needs and strength of the gardener. They come in a wide range of capacity and price. Mine is a wooden cart with twenty six inch bicycle wheels capable of handling a couple of hundred pounds on uneven ground. Pricey, but it has lasted over ten years.

Whatever tool you decide on, make sure it is well-made and matches the task for which it was intended. A quality tool may cost more but it will last and be appreciated much longer.

Share a Merry Christmas with your special gardener.

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