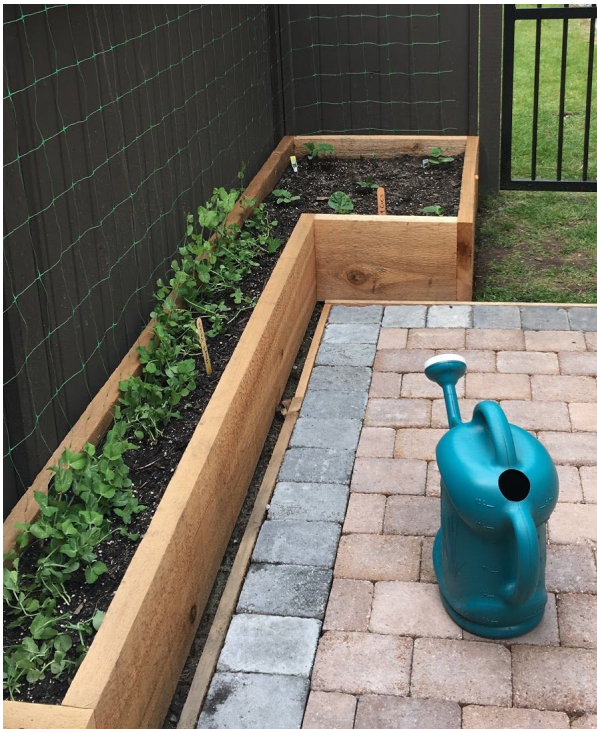


## SOLscapes Shares 5 Things to Consider When Planning a Garden

Steph and Jordie, co-owners of [SOLscapes](#), an ecologically sustainable edible landscaping company based in Squamish, share 5 things to consider before you put any plants in the ground.

### 1. What am I working with? Take some time to evaluate your site:



- How much direct and indirect sun exposure do you get? Many edible plants (veggies, herbs, fruits, and flowers) require at least 6 hrs of sun per day.

-Is it windy? If you're in Squamish, the answer is probably yes! Consider finding a sheltered spot. Or creating shelter.

-Is it level? This will impact your drainage capacity.

-Is it far away? The closer the better. If your doorstep, front/backyard, balcony or window ledge isn't an option, don't get discouraged. Work garden visits into your routine, call it a date.

-Is it close to water? Your newly installed plants will get thirsty. Make sure you're near a water source by either using a garden hose or watering cans.

### 2. Reuse!

Divert waste, get creative! What existing structures/ containers do you have access to? And can they contain soil? Think: pots, rubbermaids, raised beds (choose untreated wood), buckets, trellises, old bathtubs. Give them a good scrub first so that you reduce the risk of introducing any disease into your soil. Reach out your free community resources and local social media pages. \* Thinking of an in-ground garden? Run it by your landlord or homeowner, and make sure you inform yourself if there are any underground pipes, cables or conduits. Make a BC 1 call.





### 3. What's the scoop on dirt?

Get the good stuff. Invest in a nutrient-rich garden blend with appropriate drainage. High quality soil is at the foundation of optimal plant growth, root development, disease resistance and nutrient uptake, which by extension healthy soil will help you get the vitamins and minerals that you crave.

### 4. Right plant, right place.

Do your homework! Now that you know what your light exposure is, browse for the goodies that are on your wish list. They should be chosen accordingly to suit our growing conditions and requirements.

### 5. Consider mulching.

Bare soil is not ideal. Filling the gaps between your plants at ground level with straw (not hay!), grass clippings (avoid if there is animal waste or potential for seeding weeds into your garden), leaves, or compost will help your soil to retain moisture, suppress weeds, add nutrients as it breaks down, and help to prevent soil erosion while acting as an insulator to keep things toasty. It really is a win-win-win scenario.

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