

THE INTERNET GARDENER



A Guide to Online Resources for Gardening & Greening

Making your community greener can increase its value, make it more attractive, and even make you healthier. Whether you're just starting to green your community or are well on your way, this brochure is for you. You will find where to turn for information on motivating volunteers, horticultural expertise, and landscape design and architecture. These resources will help you build the capacity of your Keep America Beautiful affiliate to improve and beautify your community.

HORTICULTURAL & BOTANICAL INFORMATION

These resources will give you the information you need to choose, plant, and care for the trees, flowers, and plants in your greening projects.

The Council on Botanical & Horticultural Libraries

CBHL believes in the importance of making knowledge about plants accessible to the public. This site also helps visitors find their nearest horticultural library. cbhl.net

PLANTS Database

Want to find the Latin or common name of a certain plant or find out if it will grow in your area? The US Department of Agriculture's vast PLANTS Database provides information about plants found in the United States. This searchable database includes names, plant symbols, an online archive of 40,000 photos, and more. Use this site to determine which plants are native to your region or which invasives to avoid. plants.usda.gov

PLANTfacts

PLANTfacts is a knowledge bank and multimedia learning center containing images, videos, gardening FAQs, tips and more. It's rich in information from every land-grant (state) university in the United States. Also included is information on insects and diseases—something every gardener should know about. plantfacts.osu.edu

Plant Information Online

This site offers extensive databases of plant information. The whole site is available free and is a good reference for plant and seed sources. The nice part is that once you've selected a plant, it will direct you to US nurseries that carry it. plantinfo.umn.edu

BOTANICAL GARDENS AND ARBORETUMS

Your local botanic gardens and arboretums are great sources of information and events that support greening efforts. Use these Web sites to locate the institution nearest you.

American Public Gardens Association

This handy site will help you find all the gardens in your area. Included are botanical gardens, arboretums, display gardens, historical sites, and more. publicgardens.org/Custom/GardenSearch.aspx

Botanic Gardens Conservation International

Find information about botanic gardens, plant sustainability, and promoting healthy eco-systems. Conservation is a big part of this site, and you can learn about securing plant diversity around the globe. bgci.org/garden_search.php

LOCAL & NATIONAL GARDENING ORGANIZATIONS

Get involved in local and national gardening organizations to learn more about gardening and greening and to network with like-minded people.

County Extension Offices

Want your garden questions answered? Locate your nearest County Extension branch, where you can find research and noncredit training in horticulture and agriculture, as well as information on Master Gardener programs. csrees.usda.gov/Extension/index.html

The Garden Club of America

This organization seeks to foster the love of gardening and protect the quality of the environment. Visit this site to find the local Garden Club of America affiliate. gcamerica.org/clublinks.php3

National Garden Clubs, Inc., State Garden Clubs

The largest volunteer gardening organization in the world, the NGC promotes horticulture and conservation. You also get lots of gardening tips, ideas for working with youth, and instruction on floral design. gardenclub.org/Resources/StateGC.aspx

National Gardening Association

Search a vast archive of gardening information for consumers and educators, including a weed library, pest control library, a useful flower finder, and more. There are even terrific recipes using fresh garden produce. garden.org

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Knowledge of landscape design will help you plan a park, garden, or open space where visitors will want to gather and spend time.

American Society of Landscape Architects

A resource for finding local landscape architects, as well as information on the latest issues and trends in the field. asla.org/chapters.aspx

Landscapedia

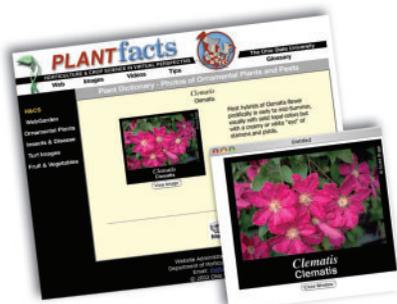
If you want to re-design your patio or garden area, this is a good place to start. Research plants, display your own projects, and discuss current design topics. Get further inspired by looking at landscape architects' digital portfolios. landscapedia.info

LandscapeOnline.com

The Web site of the landscape development industry, this site includes resources for finding landscape professionals and equipment, as well as a large database of relevant articles. Good if you want to learn about the business of landscaping. landscapeonline.com

Project for Public Spaces

Want to learn how to improve the public spaces around your town or city? PPS is dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that improve communities. Sign up for newsletters, learn about PPS projects, or participate in discussion forums. pps.org



GREENING

Greening can bring a multitude of benefits to your community. Use these resources to get started.

American Community Gardening Association

Find tips on working with volunteers, lobbying, meeting with elected officials, and other topics. The "10 Tips Series" is especially helpful and concise.
communitygarden.org

Center for Public Horticulture, University of Delaware

The Center provides a clearinghouse for education and research in public horticulture. Use this site to find research and ideas on greening public spaces. Be sure to browse the Longwood Graduate Program.
publichorticulture.udel.edu

EBSCO GreenFILE

Scholarly and general-interest articles reveal the "relationship between human beings and the environment." This is a valuable resource for anyone concerned about the state of the environment.
greeninfoonline.com

National Association of Conservation Districts

Get resources for managing and protecting land and water resources. Get involved with your district to learn how to conserve its natural resources.
nacdn.org/about/districts/directory/index.phtml

Rain Garden Network

Want to create a garden to control flooding in the landscape? Here you will find resources that help people protect the quality of our waterways and reduce pollution and stormwater runoff.
raingardennetwork.com

The Trust for Public Land

TPL conserves land as parks, community gardens, historic sites, and for other public uses.
tpl.org

Trees Are Good

The consumer education site of the International Society of Arboriculture (isa-arbor.com), this site fulfills ISA's mission of educating the public about the importance of trees and proper tree care. Need the help of a tree expert? You can also use this site to find an ISA-certified arborist in your area.
treesaregood.org

TreeLink

If you love the sight of a shady, tree-lined street, this site is for you. Find information for people working in urban and community forestry. TreeLink's Quote Source is fun to browse, too.
treelink.org

TreeVitalize

TreeVitalize is a public/private partnership with the goal of restoring Pennsylvania's tree cover by planting one million trees in the next five years. Explore its Web site, where you can learn about tree care and find links to the latest research on the benefits of trees. You can also sign up to become a Tree Tender and help TreeVitalize by planting trees in your neighborhood.
Treevitalize.net

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Volunteers make it happen! Beyond offering a set of helping hands, volunteers are a source of professional expertise including landscape architecture, construction, fundraising, and public relations. These Web sites will help you motivate, manage, and connect with them.

Energize, Inc.

Tools and information for volunteer leaders. Its online journal, *e-Volunteerism*, offers free articles and research about volunteers and volunteering.
energizeinc.com

Points of Light Institute

Dedicated to empowering volunteers and civic groups, this organization connects potential volunteers to opportunities that match their interests and skills.
pointsoflight.org

ServiceLeader.org

Find useful information for volunteer managers and service leaders.
serviceleader.org

Volunteer Match

A Web site that seeks to connect good causes with good people. The site has a database that will help you find projects by area and keyword, as well as help nonprofits, volunteer groups, and business leaders find the "people power" for projects that enrich communities.
volunteermatch.org

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR VOLUNTEERS ONLINE

Thanks to the Internet, it's easier than ever to communicate with your Keep America Beautiful volunteer group. Let's look at a few ways you can use your mouse to stay in touch.

Email

Aside from direct, person-to-person email messages, the simplest way to communicate online is by creating a group (or distribution) list in your email program. Most programs allow the user to create a group by adding a number of email addresses and then saving them under one name (such as "My KAB Group"). Then, whenever you type "My KAB Group" into the address line, everyone on your distribution list will receive that email.



ABOUT KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AND PHS

Keep America Beautiful

For over 50 years, Keep America Beautiful (KAB) has engaged individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their community environments through litter prevention, beautification, waste reduction, and recycling. Explore KAB's "Toolbox for Community Change" for tools, resources, and best practices.

kabtoolbox.org

PHS

Founded in 1827, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) is the recognized leader in community greening nationwide. Its transformational Philadelphia Green program is the regional resource for tree care, greening and gardening programs, community planning and resource development. Visit PHS online for ideas, tips and guidance on hundreds of greening topics.

pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org



Blogging

A blog is a Web page that allows people to post messages and photographs, and others to read them and respond. On many sites, the creator of the blog can designate who is allowed to write and read messages. This can be perfect for a local KAB group, since someone can post dates and times for a workday or post photos of a recent event. Best of all, most blog pages are free.

WEB SOURCES: typepad.com, wordpress.com and blogger.com

Social Media

Social media represents a fast-growing category of Web sites designed to connect people with others who share similar interests. Users can post updates, notes, photos, calendars and more. KAB's Online Affiliates' Network (kabforums.org) is one example specific to KAB affiliates, but there are dozens of popular sites that attract literally millions of users (and potential volunteers).

WEB SOURCES: facebook.com, twitter.com, idealist.org

Groups

Another popular choice for communication is an electronic mailing list or Web forum. For example, a Yahoo or Google Group is a Web-oriented group formed around a single subject, from very broad topics (such as "All about Gardening") to a very specific topic (such as one about your local KAB group). All members of your group can write messages and respond to messages by others. Like many blog sites, groups are free of charge.

WEB SOURCES: yahoogroups.com and groups.google.com

Web Calendars

This is a service (often free) that allows groups to share an online calendar. Members of these groups can post events and receive reminders of upcoming events.

WEB SOURCES: google.com/calendar and calendar.yahoo.com

Building a Web site

Some volunteer groups may choose to create their own Web site with their own name in the address (such as www.YourKABGroup.org). A Web site can be very simple—just a few pages with basic information, work dates, and a photo or two—or a very elaborate site with Flash animation and lots of linked pages.

Self-Built Sites

Many popular Internet providers give their members free Web-building software, as well as a small amount of server space to host their new Web site for free (Web sites require physical hard-drive space to exist). Check with your provider for more information on these self-built and often free sites.

WEB SOURCES: godaddy.com, tucows.com, aol.com, earthlink.net, and joomla.org

Using a Web Developer ... or a Friend!

If you have the financial resources, you could hire a web developer to build a site for your KAB group. The developer will meet with you to discuss functions you need your site to fulfill and then help you design the required pages. You should also talk about long-term hosting of the site, as well as who will upload future information updates.

WEB SOURCES: web-development.com and freelancedesigners.com

One More Note

Please note that while the Internet is a tremendous resource, there are likely some people involved with your group who do not use computers regularly. This is especially true among older people and in low-income neighborhoods. Ensure that these people are not excluded from events and meetings and that there are alternative means of disseminating information.

