

Course Title: Home Horticulture online

Dates Offered: Begins Friday Jan. 9, 2026, ends Friday April 9, 2026

Instructor: Signe Danler

Instructor email: signe.danler@oregonstate.edu

Please note: the *best* way to contact your instructors is via email or the discussion board in the course.

Inclusivity

Everyone is welcome in this course, whatever your race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, disability status, religion, regional background, veteran status, citizenship status, nationality, or other identities. Each of you has a unique viewpoint and set of experiences that will inform your own gardening, and I welcome you to share your ideas with your instructor and fellow students.

Course Description

In this course you will learn about the art and the science of caring for plants. We examine different types of plants such as woody, herbaceous, annual and perennial, including how to care for them and how to use them in different types of gardens. We'll delve into horticultural basics that influence the growth and vigor of plants in the home garden, such as basic botany, pathogens, soils, insects, and management decisions.

We will also focus on the prevention and diagnosis of plant problems, as well as a least toxic approach to tolerating and/or managing plant problems in the home horticultural landscape.

Most students find that it takes between 3-6 hours each week to complete a module. This estimate includes time to view narrated lectures, participate in the discussion board, and complete readings, assignments and quizzes. Some modules may require less or more time. Those who have had previous experience with botany or horticulture coursework tend to take less time than those who have not taken these or similar courses.

Prerequisites: The online Home Horticulture course is designed for anyone who is interested in learning more about the effective and sustainable management of their home garden and landscape. There are no course pre-requisites, although a basic level of plant knowledge is helpful.

Credit Type

Certificate of Home Horticulture (*This course is NOT a pathway to Master Gardener certification*).

Participants receive a Certificate of Home Horticulture upon successful completion of the online course. This course is well suited for those wanting a comprehensive course in sustainable gardening, for professional development or personal enrichment purposes.

CEU Credit:

National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP): 24 CEUs

Oregon Landscape Contractors Board (OLCB): 16 CEHs

Accessing the Course

You will access the course via Ideal-Logic (<https://apps.ideal-logic.com/osupace>). Ideal-logic acts as the verification portal for your identity. *Use the email you registered with.*

Canvas: This course will be delivered via Canvas where you will access the syllabus, learning materials, tutorials, discuss issues and/or display your projects. If you are having problems accessing Canvas [check your computer compatibility](#).

This course is offered through OSU Professional and Continuing Education. Contact us for more information. Web: pace.oregonstate.edu Email: pace@oregonstate.edu Tel: (541) 737-4197

Technology Support

If you experience difficulties, need assistance accessing your course, or if you experience any errors or problems, please contact PACE at (541)737-4197 or email pace@oregonstate.edu. We are available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Pacific time.

Assigned Text

Sustainable Gardening: the Oregon-Washington Master Gardener Handbook. OSU Extension Publication EM 8742.

Digital copies of assigned readings from this text will be posted in the course. A hard copy of the entire Sustainable Gardening text (which includes additional topics that are not covered in this class) may be purchased for \$30.00 from OSU Extension Service Publications.

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em8742>

Measurable Learning Outcomes

Course Objectives

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Utilize basic terms, concepts and practices needed in the installation and maintenance of a home garden.
- Diagnose plant problems and propose solutions.
- Apply principles of sustainable gardening to growing food and ornamental plants sustainably under your local conditions.
- Locate and access research-based information to enable you to make informed decisions about your choice of plant materials and management approach in the garden.

Course Structure

Module Availability: : There are 12 required topic modules and four optional “bonus” topics. One required topic will be covered each week. You can choose to view the bonus topics any time.

Modules will be available to students by 5:00 p.m. each Friday, so that students who can only spend weekends on it will not be behind the others in the class for discussions. Each week of the course, an additional module will open, and they will all remain available for the duration of the course. Please plan accordingly, so that you can work through all of the information presented in a single module before moving onto the next one.

Within each week’s module, you will find:

- Learning objectives for the module
- Reading(s)
- Narrated PowerPoint lecture
- Written transcript of the lecture’s narration
- Assignment, to be posted on the discussion board
- Links to additional resources
- Self-test Quiz

Assignments and Discussion Board: Each week’s Module includes an Assignment which is designed to extend your learning and, in many cases, give you hands-on experience within the topic. You can use your own or another garden as the site for some of these assignments, but you are encouraged to use the same site consistently.

You will upload your assignments to the Discussion Board as .pdf or Word (.doc or .docx) files. A great deal of additional learning can take place during discussions of the assignments on the online discussion board. Therefore please try to post your assignment by Wednesday of each week, and comment on other student's assignments during the same week, so that you can benefit and learn from each other's experiences.

The instructor will comment on every assignment submitted during the topic week, but assignments submitted after the topic week will only be commented on if time permits.

Missed Modules: Because course modules will remain open during and after the week for which they are scheduled, you will be able to make up any coursework that you might have missed. Simply work through the missed module at your own pace.

Class Participation: It is up to you individually whether to actively participate in class via the completion of readings, assignments, quizzes and discussion. However, *you will acquire and retain more knowledge, and enjoy your online learning experience more, if you are actively engaged in the course.* Therefore, I STRONGLY encourage you to complete all readings and assignments, to challenge yourself with the quizzes, and to initiate and respond to discussion board posts on a weekly basis.

Evaluation and Grading

Assignments: Each of the 12 required topics has an assignment, which is posted on the Discussion Board. Assignments count for 20% of your total grade, and are graded complete (1 point)/incomplete (0 points). You may skip up to two assignments without penalty.

Quizzes: Each topic has a short quiz. The quizzes count for 20% of your total grade.

Final Exam: The Final Exam counts for 60% of your total grade. This exam is open book and open notes.

Passing the course: In order to receive your Home Horticulture certificate you must earn 70% or above on your total grades.

The Final Exam will be available to students for one week at the end of the course. During this time, all course modules will be open and available for student use. The question format will be similar to the quizzes, i.e. primarily multiple choice, true/false and matching. However, where the quizzes are 10 - 20 questions in length, the final exam is 80-100 questions in length.

The goal of the final exam is not to test how well you can remember items presented during the course, but rather to test how well you can carefully consider a question and utilize appropriate resource materials to formulate an answer. Therefore, you are allowed and encouraged to use all course materials, including lectures, readings, previous assignments, and previous quizzes, to help you complete the final exam. You may also use the PNW Handbooks and other OSU Extension materials.

If your cumulative score is less than 70%, you may contact the instructor to discuss your results. You will then be given one chance to retake the exam. If this attempt does not bring your score up to 70%, you will not receive your Home Horticulture certificate, as you will not have successfully completed the requirements for this course.

Incompletes: Under special, extenuating circumstances that prevent a student from completing the course as scheduled, students may be granted an extended opportunity to complete the final exam. Such extensions are granted via special permission of the instructor, and are not to exceed 6 months. *If you are having any difficulty that might prevent you completing the coursework, please let the instructor know right away, so we can discuss options to help you.*

Communication

Please post all course-related questions in the General Discussion Forum so that the whole class may benefit from our conversation. Email your instructor directly for matters of a personal nature.

Ground Rules for Online Communication & Participation:

- *Online threaded discussions* are public messages, and all writings in this area will be viewable by the entire class. If you prefer that only the instructor sees your communication, send it by email, and be sure to identify yourself and the class.
- *Posting of personal contact information* is discouraged (e.g. telephone numbers, address, personal website address).
- *Online Instructor Response Policy*: I will check email frequently and will respond to course-related questions within 24 hours, excluding weekends.
- Before you ask general course "housekeeping" questions (i.e. how do I submit an assignment?), check the "Help" area on Canvas sidebar, and the course syllabus. If you don't see your answer there, then contact the instructor.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at <http://ds.oregonstate.edu>. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

PACE seeks to accommodate the diverse experiences and learning styles of the students and is open to feedback for improving the course, during this quarter and subsequent quarters. To provide direct feedback please email pace@oregonstate.edu. If you require accommodations please contact your instructor or PACE.

Guidelines for a Welcoming and Productive Online Space:

You can help make this a welcoming and productive learning community for everyone.

- To start with, please tell us all something about yourself on the "Introductions" Discussion Board. Who knows, you may find that someone else in the class lives near you, and maybe even shares your passion for beagles...or mountain climbing...or even dahlias.
- If your preferred name and/or pronouns differ from those that appear in your Canvas registration, please let me know. You can add your preferred pronouns to Canvas, as well.
- If you are having issues outside of class that will affect your ability to participate, please don't hesitate to contact me, the sooner the better. We can almost always work out an accommodation.
- Other students may have perspectives different from your own. Please be respectful and open; everything can be a learning experience.
- The flip side of that is, if you are made uncomfortable in any way by any other member of the class, please contact me so we can discuss it and take suitable action.
- If you have suggestions for improving the inclusiveness and diversity of experiences represented in the course, I welcome them.
- This is an evidence-based course, in keeping with the foundational philosophy of Extension. While discussion of ideas and methods that are not necessarily scientific is welcome, they cannot be taught as part of the course.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email postings) in a civil manner. Students will be expected to treat all others with the same respect, as they would want afforded themselves. Civility is an essential ingredient for academic discourse. All communications for this course should be conducted constructively, civilly, and respectfully. Differences in beliefs, opinions, and approaches are to be expected. Disrespectful behavior to others (such as harassing behavior, personal insults, inappropriate language) or disruptive behaviors in the is unacceptable.

Here is a reference that discusses writing online: www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html.

Expectations for Student Conduct

Student conduct is governed by the university's policies, as explained in the [Student Conduct Code](#). In an academic community, students, faculty, and staff each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment, whether online or in the classroom. Students, faculty, and staff have the responsibility to treat each other with understanding, dignity and respect. Disruption of teaching, administration, research, and other institutional activities is prohibited by Oregon Administrative Rule 576-015-0015 (1) and (2) and is subject to sanctions under university policies, OSU Office of Student Conduct.

Plagiarism: You are expected to submit your own work in all your assignments, postings to the discussion board, and other communications, and to clearly give credit to the work of others when you use it.

Course Evaluation

Course evaluation results are extremely important and are used to help improve this course and the learning experience of future students. Please participate in the evaluation(s) at the end of the course.

Note: *The contents of this syllabus are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, or if the instructor deems it necessary.*

Online Home Horticulture Course Schedule, Winter 2026

Week (Fri-Thurs)	Module #	Module Name	Reading	Assignment due (for Instructor feedback)**
Jan. 9--15	1	Botany Basics	VanderZanden, A. M. Botany Basics , Chapter 1 in Sustainable Gardening*	January 18, 9:00 p.m.
Jan. 16-22	2	Soils and Fertilizer (see also Compost)	Cogger, C. Soils and Fertilizers , Chapter 2 in Sustainable Gardening*	January 25, 9:00 p.m.
Jan. 23-29	3	Plant Pathology	Pscheidt, J. W. Plant Disease , Chapter 15 in Sustainable Gardening*	February 1, 9:00 p.m.
Jan. 30- Feb. 5	4	Introduction to Entomology	Antonelli, A. Basic Entomology , Chapter 14 in Sustainable Gardening*	February 8, 9:00 p.m.
Feb. 6-12	5	Container and Small Space Gardening	Pinyuh, G., Antonellie, A. L. and Collman, S. J. 2004. Houseplants , Ch 13 in Sustainable Gardening*	February 15, 9:00 p.m.
Feb. 13-19	6	Integrated Pest Management (IPM)	Gredler, G. Integrated Pest Management , Ch. 20 in Sustainable Gardening*	February 22, 9:00 p.m.
Feb. 20-26	7	Pesticide Safety	Shenk, M. (editor). Understanding Pesticides , Ch. 19 in Sustainable Gardening*	March 1, 9:00 p.m.
Feb. 27- March 5	8	Vegetable Gardening	Patterson, P. Vegetable Gardening , Chapter 7 in Sustainable Gardening*	March 8, 9:00 p.m.
March 6- 12	9	Herbaceous Ornamentals	Robson, M. Herbaceous Ornamental Plants , Ch. 8 in Sustainable Gardening*	March 15, 9:00 p.m.
March 13- 19	10	Woody Landscape Plants	Maleike, R. 2004. Woody Landscape Plants , Chapter 9 in Sustainable Gardening*	March 22, 9:00 p.m.
March 20- 26	11	Pruning Woody Plants	McNeilan, R.. Pruning, Chapter 4 in Sustainable Gardening*	March 29, 9:00 p.m.

March 27- April 2	12	Sustainable Landscape Design <i>(see also Sustainable Landscape Management)</i>	Renquist, S. In Preparation. Sustainable Landscape Design . <i>This chapter is being reviewed for inclusion in the updated Oregon Master Gardener Handbook.</i> ***OPTIONAL*** McNeilan, J. Sustainable Landscape Design, Chapter 21 in Sustainable Gardening*	April 5, 9:00 p.m.
April 3 - 10	FINAL EXAM	Comprehensive Final Exam	The final exam will be available to students beginning at 5:00 p.m (PST) on Friday, April 4, 2025, and close at 11:59 pm Friday April 11, 2025. The exam is open book and open course. During this time, all course modules will be open and available for student use. Access to the final exam will end at 11:59 pm (PST) on Friday, April 10.	Friday, April 10, 2026, 11:59 pm (PST)
May 10	Course Closes		The course will remain open for 30 days after the end date. Please use this time to download any materials you might want to keep. Course closes Friday, May 10, 2024, 11:59pm	
BONUS MODULES These modules are not in the main course this year. You are invited to take them on your own. There will be no discussion board for them, and there will be no questions on these topics in the Final Exam.		Diagnosing Plant Problems	Green, J. L., O. Maloy and J. Capizzi. Diagnosing Plant Problems , Chapter 16 in Sustainable Gardening*	
		Sustainable Landscape Management <i>(continuation of Sustainable Landscape Design)</i>	Bobbitt, V. et al. Your Yard and Water Quality , Chapter 6 in Sustainable Gardening* Bubl, Chip. Weed Management , Chapter 17 in Sustainable Gardening*	
		Gardening with PNW Native Plants	McMahan, Linda, Reprinted March 2008. Gardening with Oregon native plants West of the Cascades . OSU Extension Publication EC 1577 McNeilan, R. (editor). Plant Propagation , Chapter 3 in Sustainable Gardening*	
		Compost <i>(formerly part of Soils and Fertilizer)</i>	Cogger, C. Composting , Chapter 5 in Sustainable Gardening*	

* Sustainable Gardening, The Oregon-Washington Master Gardener Handbook. Oregon State University Extension Service Publication EM8742.

** The instructor will comment on every assignment submitted during the topic week, but assignments submitted after the topic week will be commented on when/if time permits.