

SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE GARDENING

CHECKLIST

- Step 1** Have a quick look at the headings and what is covered in the booklet.
- Step 2** Ask yourself, “How is my garden layout working or not working as it is now?”
- Step 3** Complete the checklist, and if you can, do a basic sketch of your garden layout.
- Step 4** Note the issues that may need attention and read the relevant section in the booklet.

If you have answered “yes” to any of the checklist questions, it is likely that there is a related safety or sustainability issue. Ideas for resolving such issues are in this booklet. The checklist gives the page to return to for each relevant section.

After you’ve completed the checklist, you’ll have highlighted some changes you’d like to make. Once you’ve decided how you want the garden to be, the next step is to make a plan for dealing with any existing safety issues.

As everyone’s garden is unique, there may be things that aren’t covered in the checklist. Please refer to the list of further resources at the end of the booklet for more detailed information.

your garden as it is now

date:

What do you like about your garden?

What don't you like about your garden?

What changes would you like to make?

What do you like to do in your garden?

How do you want to spend your time in it?

cost

Do you spend more than you can afford in your garden?
(Is that an issue for you?)

What costs the most?

ACCESS moving around safely in your garden

Booklet pp 8-13

questions	yes	no	your comments/actions you could take
Are there any steps?			
Do any of the steps have broken, slippery or eroding edges?			
Are any of the steps very shallow, narrow, or too high?			
Are there any steep slopes or steep paths?			
Are any of the paths and steps rough or uneven?			
Are there places where paving surfaces are very glary, or colours of paths change suddenly?			
Are there paths or steps that are heavily shaded by trees?			
Are any parts of the paths eroding?			
Are there slippery paths, or other slippery areas? (Any places where water pools? Blocked drains?)			
Are there any grassy areas you need to walk across?			

access (contd) moving safely around your garden

Booklet pp 8-13

questions	yes	no	your comments/actions you could take
Are there any places where you have tripped or fallen? eg, because of rocks, tree stumps, garden edges, tree roots, loose material, hoses etc			
Are your paths too narrow for two people, a washing trolley, a walking frame or other needs?			
Are there low hanging branches, or low pergolas, or other structures that people might hit their heads on?			
Are there any gates that are difficult to open or close?			
Are there any places where lighting is a problem? eg, if you need to move around outside after dark?			
Do you need places to sit down and rest?			
Is it difficult to get to a toilet if you are in the garden?			
Is it difficult to get to, or reach, your letterbox?			
Is it difficult for you to use the clothes line?			
Is the clothes line in a shady position?			

Is it difficult to access the gardening tools?			
Is it difficult to get to your firewood?			
Are there any other problems with your garden that make it difficult to move around?			
Are there any other things you do in the garden that you need easy and regular access to?			
Are there places you don't go in your garden? Do you want to be able to go to these places?			

managing waste

Is it hard to get waste to your garbage bin and recycling crate, or to put them out for collection?			
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outdoor seating areas

Do you have a sunny place to sit in winter? Do you have a shady place to sit in summer? Are these places protected from the wind?			
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PLANTS looking after the plants in your garden ... protecting nearby bushland

Booklet pp 16-18

questions	yes	no	your comments/actions you could take
Does your garden have dangerous plants, eg, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poisonous or prickly? • trees that drop leaves, flowers or fruit that make it slippery? • trees that are dying or diseased? 			
Do you have 'nuisance plants' such as trees with roots that lift paths, or which have low branches?			
Does your garden have plants which are <i>noxious</i> or <i>environmental</i> weeds?			
Do you have herbs, vegetables or fruit trees? Do they need regular maintenance?			
Are there other parts of your garden that need lots of care or ongoing work? eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does it need lots of weeding? • do you use herbicides to control weeds? • are there plants that need regular pruning? 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is there much mowing to do? • are there plants that need fertilising, spraying or feeding with compost? • do you need leaves to be raked up regularly? • are there other regular maintenance jobs? 			
<p>Do you need help with the work in your garden? Is it possible that this help will not be available in the future?</p>			

**WATER where water is used, and how often
water needs of your plants**

Is your garden mostly exotic (non-native) plants?			
Do you have many plants that need regular watering?			
Are all the plants with high water needs planted near each other?			
Do you water your lawn?			

water (contd)

stormwater and erosion

Booklet pp 22-25

questions	yes	no	your comments/actions you could take
Does stormwater on your land create any problems such as erosion, sediment run-off, slippery paths?			
Does water run off your garden beds because they slope or are uneven?			
Are your garden beds bare?			
Is there natural bushland near your garden? If yes, is it downslope from you?			

water sources

Booklet pp 20-22

Do you get all your water from the town water supply?			
Do you use bore water?			
Do you use grey water directly on the garden?			
Are your taps far from where they are needed?			
Is it hard for you to reuse water from your house in the garden?			
Do you have any broken/leaking roof gutters or leaky taps?			

Do you water your garden with a			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hose? • seeper hose? • drip irrigation? • can or bucket? 			
Is watering difficult for you?			
Do water restrictions create a problem for you?			

DESIGN the layout of your garden

lawn

Does lawn take up most of your garden area?			
Do you cut the grass very short?			
Do you fertilise the lawn?			

garden beds

Is it hard to get to the plants you need to reach often (eg, herbs)?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are they far from the house? • is access to them rough or steep? 			
Are the garden beds too low or too wide for you to reach easily? eg, do you have to bend down or stretch to get to them?			

design (contd) the layout of your garden

animals

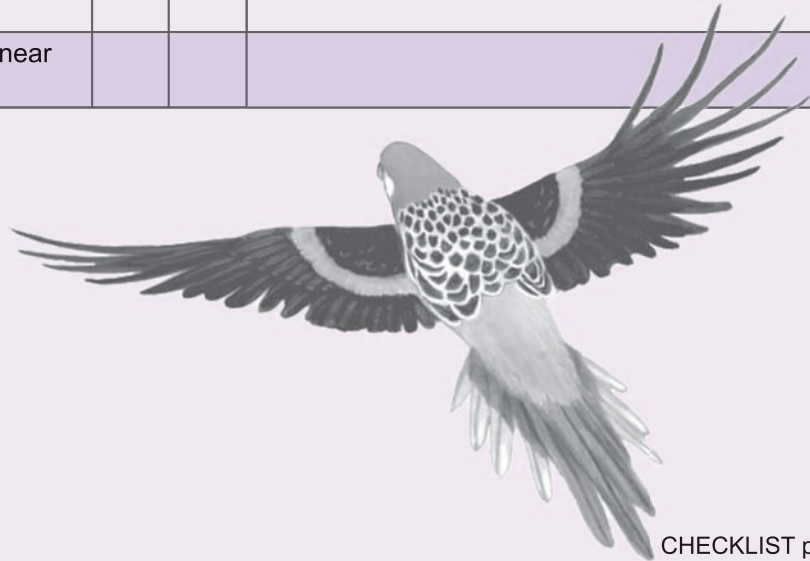
Booklet pp 27-29

questions	yes	no	your comments/actions you could take
Do you keep domestic animals? (eg, pets, chooks)			
Do you feed your pets outside?			
Are feral animals or pests attracted to your place because of your animals?			
Is your garden an unsafe place for native birds and animals? (ie, where they could be attacked by predators such as cats, foxes, dogs)			
Do you feed native birds or animals?			
Do you have fences that are not dog-proof?			
Do you have a lot of large birds visiting your garden, but not many small ones?			
Do you have holes or gaps under the house or in the roof that pests could get into?			
Does your garden encourage any animals or insects you think are dangerous?			

FIRE RISK

Booklet p19

<p>Do you live in a high fire risk area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are there trees overhanging your house which could be a fire risk?• are there trees or shrubs close to the house?• are your gutters difficult to clean out?• do you have maintenance jobs to do around the house before each summer?• is it hard to block your gutters and fill them with water?• could the roof or the eaves trap embers?			
<p>If you use firewood for heating, is it stored near the house?</p>			



DEVELOPING A PLAN

Draw a rough sketch of your property showing:

- north
- direction of any slope
- location of house and outbuildings
- paths and driveway
- garden beds, bushland, lawn, vegie garden
- chook pen, fences, other features

Check page 2 of the checklist for what you said you liked and didn't like.

- Now pencil in your ideas for changes: read the relevant sections of the booklet as you think about how these changes might work.



Check through the issues you ticked that needed further attention.