

DIY Permablitz Kit

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Welcome to the DIY Permablitz Kit

Friends of the Earth Sydney

Friends of the Earth Sydney is a community-based group campaigning for local and global environmental justice, to reclaim a nuclear free future, for food sovereignty, Aboriginal land rights and justice, climate and trade justice, and for glorious global action.

So far, FoE Sydney have hosted the Trajectories of Dissent Art Exhibition drawing people together before the Sydney APEC meeting, begun 'permablitzes' across Sydney backyards, and campaigned for a just transition away from coal in NSW. We are open to new people and new ideas - please get in touch.

Friends of the Earth Australia is a federation of independent local groups working for a socially equitable and environmentally sustainable future. Founded in 1974, FoEA has evolved into a diverse and vibrant network of groups that are working at the local, regional, national and international level over the last 32 years. Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) is the world's largest federation of national environmental organisations. The network is now active in 71 countries, with more than 5,000 local branches.

Permablitz and Friends of the Earth Sydney recognise and pay respect to the Indigenous nations and traditional caretakers of the land. We acknowledge this land was and always will be an integral part of the spiritual and cultural histories of Indigenous peoples. We recognise sovereignty was never ceded.

More than 500 Indigenous nations shared this land for over 40,000 years before invasion. We express solidarity and continued commitment to working with Indigenous peoples, both in Australia and around the world, in ongoing struggles for land rights, self determination, sovereignty and the recognition of past injustices.

This Kit was produced on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. If you are reading this you are standing on Aboriginal land.

What is Permaculture?

Permaculture is an innovative principle that aims to eliminate society's reliance on the destructive industrial production and distribution of agriculture that threatens the delicate nature of the earth's ecology by making people self-sufficient. It is an idea that was pioneered in Australia in the 1970s by Bill Mollison and David Holgen who drew on principles from other disciplines including organic agriculture, sustainable forestry, horticulture and agroforestry, as well as knowledge from indigenous communities about the land.

The term 'Permaculture' was originally derived as a conglomeration of the terms 'permanent' and 'agriculture', but later also came to be linked with the idea of 'permanent culture', due to the social aspects involved with the creation and up keep of a Permaculture garden. There are three core principles in Permaculture, as outlined by Mollison (1988, p.2). These are:

- 🍓 Care for the Earth, Mollison stated is "the only ethical decision is to take responsibility for our own existence and that of our children" (Mollison 1988, p.1).
- 🍓 Care for People, Mollison stated Care for People is necessary as "cooperation, not competition is the very basis of existing life systems and of future survival" (Mollison 1988, p.1).
- 🍓 Fair Share or Setting limits to population and consumption, that is by catering only to our needs we will be able to still have resources for generations to come

Permaculture aims to achieve these three core principles by mimicking the structure and interrelationship found in natural ecologies in agriculture, which is done by replicating, as closely as possible, the wild equivalent of an edible ecology. This is done largely through planting an 'integrated, evolving system of perennial or self perpetuating plant and animal species, useful to man' (Mollison & Holmgren 1978, p.1). Ideally a Permaculture garden will evolve over time to become a complex structure that yields maximum produce with minimum input.

12 Design Principles of Permaculture

1. **Observe and Interact:**

By taking time to engage, observe and interact with nature you can design a solution that is most appropriate to your situation

2. **Catch and store energy:**

By developing systems that collect resources when they are abundant, such as seasonal rainfall, we can use them in times of need as well as make sure there will be enough resources for future generations

3. **Obtain a yield:**

Design your system to create self reliance and to ensure that you are generating useful produce as part of the work that you are doing

4. **Apply self regulation and accept feedback:**

Limit or discourage inappropriate activity or growth within your system to ensure that it can continue to function well. Ideally, strive for a self maintaining and regulating system, therefore make each element of your system as self efficient as possible

5. Use and value renewable resources and services:

Make the best use of abundant natural and renewable resources to reduce our impact on the environment and our dependence on non-renewable resources.

6. Produce no waste:

Value and use all resources and design your system to make use of all outputs so that you produce no waste.

7. Design from patterns to details:

Take time to step back to observe patterns in nature and society, this will enable you create a framework for your system and you can fill in the detail as you go.

8. Integrate rather than segregate:

The correct placement of elements within your system is crucial. Placing the right things in the right place will create relationships between elements so that they will support each other. Make sure to remember that each element performs many functions and each function is supported by many elements.

9. Use small and slow solutions:

More often than not fast solutions only last for a short time, whereas solutions that take longer to put in place, work and last for a much longer period of time. Therefore, start small, as small systems are easier to maintain.

10. Use and value diversity:

Diversity reduces vulnerability and provides insurance against the vagaries of nature.

11. Use edges and value the marginal:

The edge between two entities is often where the most rich, diverse and unique products are created and the most interesting events occur.

12. Creatively use and respond to change:

Change is inevitable, but by carefully observing and acting in a positive way at an appropriate time you can turn a change for the worse to a change for the better.



Cecilia's Permaculture Illustrations, Agriolutions, <http://www.agriculturalsolutions.com.au/illustrations.html>

Permaculture: sustainable design for community food production

How we got here: a brief history of industrial agriculture

Until the 1960s agriculture existed only on a subsistence level, therefore successful growing years and large harvests brought about population growth, but times of drought or crop failure brought about wide spread famine, which in turn acted as a stopper on population growth. In addition to this only a limited amount of land was able to be utilised for food production, therefore once all viable land had been utilised, population growth stabilised. Then came the age of exploration and the expansion to the “new world”, where new land was found to cultivate, therefore again population growth was enabled. This continued until virtually all viably productive land had been exploited for



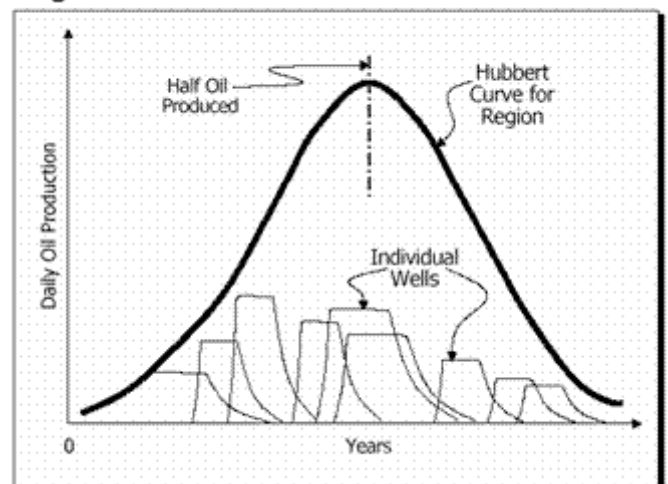
food production, which again had the effect of curbing population growth. This relationship between agriculture and population growth existed in equilibrium until the green revolution of the 1960s. The green revolution was a period of exponential transformation of the food production industry, enabled by the abundance of cheap hydrocarbon energy, mainly oil and natural gas. The green revolution saw huge technological breakthroughs in fertilisers and pesticides, which were both radically transformed through the use of

hydrocarbons as their base ingredient. Tilling, planting and harvesting, were also increasingly mechanised. As a result of the green revolution, land that was previously marginal or depleted was able to be utilised for food production and subsequently the agriculture industry became dangerously reliant on oil, from growing, to maintenance to harvesting, processing, transporting and storing. As a result of the green revolution between 1950 and 1984 world grain production increased 250% and even though the security of food became very unstable, and still is today, food became vastly abundant and cheaper than ever. However the green revolution not only enabled an immense growth of food availability, but also unprecedented population growth.

Running on Empty: the peak of oil

Peak oil is not the end of oil production but the point at which oil production has reached its maximum. Crude oil, or petroleum, is a finite resource that is extracted from reserves through the use of natural pressure present in the oil wells or through introducing pressure in the form of carbon dioxide or natural gas. When half of the oil in the reserve has been extracted this is known as the peak of production. From this point onwards the extraction of the oil in the reserve becomes

HUBBERT CURVE Regional Vs. Individual Wells



Energy Bulletin, Peak oil primer, <http://www.energybulletin.net/primer.php>

increasingly difficult and the oil extracted is of progressively poorer quality, therefore requiring more refining. In the 1950's M King Hubbert, a renowned American geologist, after studying the production of oil in many areas, proposed that America would see its oil production peak in the 1970's and the world peak between 1990 and 2000. When worldwide oil production peaks, it is predicted that the price of petrol everywhere will sky rocket, as was seen when the American oil production peaked in the 1970/71, as Hubbert had predicted, and petrol prices quadrupled, almost overnight. This price increase will not only have an effect on how often and how far we drive our cars, and how much petrol we can afford to put in them, but it will also have an effect on all aspects of life. At the moment 43% (IEA 2005) of the world's fuel consumption is of oil and 95% of energy used for transportation comes from crude oil. However, oil is not only vital to the transportation industry, it is crucial to all industries commerce, medicine, politics and particularly agriculture. The agriculture industry has a colossal reliance on oil, from the pesticides and fertilizers used in the growing stages, which are generally all petroleum based, to the shipping of the produce. On average for every calorie of food eaten in North America 10 calories (Savinar 2007) of fossil fuel have gone into producing it, and every piece of food has travelled approximately 2400 kilometres (Savinar 2007) before it reaches your plate. Therefore, as the world's oil production moves towards its peak and then starts to decline there could be catastrophic impacts on the agriculture industry and subsequently on the availability of food.

Facing up to climate change

The agriculture industry not only contributes significantly to climate change, through green house gas emissions, but climate change is also significantly affecting the agriculture industry. Throughout



the food production process, from planting right until the food reaches the table, the agriculture industry consumes an immense amount of fossil fuels and fossil fuel by products. Extensive planting and fertilizing, with oil based fertilisers, drains soil of its nutrients and degrades its composition, thus the soil then requires further fertilizing in order to yield sufficient quantities of crops. Excessive amounts of green house gasses are also released by the agriculture sector, in particular in the shipping stage of production, as every piece of food has travelled approximately 2400 kilometres (Savinar 2007) before it reaches your plate. The agricultural industry is also particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change especially increases in temperature and atmospheric carbon dioxide, decreases in rainfall and increased frequency of extreme weather events. These changes to climate have far reaching effects to all sectors of the agriculture industry

including live stock, and their health and food supplies, crop yields' quality and resilience to pests as well as extreme depletion of nutrients in the soil and severe erosion of top soil. Climate change also affects the reliability and quality of water available affecting soil moisture and demands for irrigation. Consequently the cost of agricultural production is rising which also influences the price of food.

Learning from the Cuban Experience: survival, sustainability and building community

As a result of the breakdown of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, Cuba experienced an economic crisis. During this time Cuba lost 85% of their trade and their oil and food imports were reduced by over 50%. The average daily caloric intake per person dropped by 1/3, resulting in the average Cuban losing 10-12 kg. Cuba was also subject to US embargos, which up to 7500 deaths per year could be attributed to directly, as US interests controlled the majority of the economy including large sugar plantations, oil refineries, electrical utilities and communication systems as well as the majority of banks.

Prior to the economic collapse Cuba had the most industrialized farming practices in all of Latin America as well as a life expectancy, GNP and literacy rate that surpassed its neighbours. However the country had an immense reliance on oil imports for transport, machinery, fuel, food production, pesticides, fertilizers and animal feed, therefore during the special period, when oil imports plummeted, the nation was forced to find alternative solutions. This alternative, for the food industry, was localized, organic, urban agriculture. This meant that farming practices were to be turned from high input and fossil fuel dependent to low input and self-reliant. Farmers began to use manure, compost and worm farms to regenerate the mineral depleted soil, new technologies such as biopesticides and natural microbe enemies to fight pests and replaced tractors with oxen. The extraordinary success of this agricultural transformation, did not, however, just come from nowhere. Preceding the collapse the Cuban government had been involved in extensive research into sustainable energy and farming practices. At the time Cuba held 2% of the entire Latin American population and 11% of Latin America's scientists. The success can also be attributed to Cuba's climate, which, due to its warmth, is conducive to long growing seasons.

Along with the small organic farms, urban gardens also began to appear throughout Cuba, as a means to counteract the food shortages. Even though the government had put in place ration distribution programs, still many people did not have enough food. As a result of this, in cities all over Cuba people began to make the most of all arable land ad hoc, planting gardens on rooves, patios, foot paths and in vacant lots. These gardens allowed families to not only produce enough food to sufficiently feed their families but also subsidise their income through selling their excess. Urban garden markets were set up to enable people to sell their excess, but at a price well below that of farmers markets, therefore now all people are able to have access to sufficient healthy food, including the elderly and sick. In addition to an abundance of food these urban gardens have also created strong social networks among communities, due to all people working together maintain prolific urban gardens.

Since the food revolution in Cuba daily caloric intake is almost back to the levels prior to the economic crash and food production rates are the same as those prior to the crash. Today half of the produce consumed in Havana is grown in the city and 60% of vegetables consumed in all of Cuba are from urban gardens.



Reclaiming the food chain: imagining different food futures

Permablitz: Changing the World One Garden at a Time

Permablitz Sydney is a Friends of the Earth project that has emerged from the global Permaculture movement. It aims at addressing the issues of food sustainability, climate change and peak oil. The initiative is somewhat based on the channel 9 production *Backyard Blitz*, where a group of people 'makeover' a rundown garden to one that is aesthetically pleasing as well as liveable. The Friends of the Earth Sydney Permablitz operate in a similar way, in that a group of people 'makeover' a rundown garden; however these gardens are remodelled according to the principles of Permaculture. Permablitz is a way that people living in urban areas can do something positive about issues of climate change in a way that is fun and inexpensive. Permablitz is about establishing a garden that with minimum effort will provide you with your own organic fruit and vegies, which will reduce your dependence on food that is produced at great cost to the environment, with a heavy reliance on hydrocarbon energy.

A Permablitz is an informal fun event involving a day where a group of people, doesn't matter how many, come together to transform a rundown yard into an edible garden or add to an existing one, share skills related to Permaculture and sustainability, build a community network and most importantly have fun. By having Permablitzes not only are gardens being transformed into wonderful edible ecosystems but food security is being ensured for the owners of the garden, and their community, and organic eating is being made accessible to all, not just those who are able to afford to buy produce from organic grocers.



Pervious Permablitz

Wigram Rd Permablitz Reflections....

Alex McClean

Sunday the 4th of November, Sydney's first ever 'Permablitz' took place in the unassuming surrounds of 87 Wigram Rd. Humble the premises may have been, modest perhaps were the resulting garden beds, but there was still something that set this day apart from the average Sunday in the garden.



Before the blitz team arrived



Just a few weeds!

True, many a working bee has gone before it. It is not even the first Permaculture working bee to have been mustered in Sydney. But there is something distinctive about a 'permablitz' which makes it worth marking as the first of its kind and as different from the many other noble varieties of greenthumbery. A permablitz seeks to establish in an urban backyard in one day, a garden which reflects the principles and practices of sustainability as distilled in the permaculture design system: working with nature, not against it; copying natural systems so they work

for you; maximising yields while minimising external outputs; and creating beautiful, rich, abundant human habitats that teem with life and support all its elements – including the humans! Not only that, the permablitz is an event that anyone can come to – making this a community event just as much as it is a gardening event. World domination may not exactly be the ultimate goal, but something like a vibrant network of food forests, sharing resources, know-how and the odd pumpkin sure is! But why get all Machiavellian about it? The fun along the way more than justifies the enterprise.

And so it was that we, a pretty regular innercity family of 3 (plus flatmate) decided to throw such a shebang in our own backyard – hyperactive 2 year old and masters thesis notwithstanding. We weren't alone in the exercise, nor in our desire for the oxygen that such an undertaking would



Getting started

provide from the stifling reality of the looming climate change and peak oil with the pressures they will create on our energy hungry urbanised society and it's shrink wrapped imagination. The newly reformed Friends of the Earth Sydney crew provided the get up and go to make it happen and within a few short weeks or so of getting off the ground, the whole thing was satisfyingly close to out of control – over 100 people signed up to the facebook site and 50 confirmed RSVP's for the day, all in a 10m x 10m, asthma weed filled Glebe backyard!

For us, designing the backyard was not so difficult – I had recently completed a permaculture design course so I was keen for the experience. If this is not you, don't switch off now. You don't need to be an expert to do it, but a little help from someone with the right skills will certainly make sure you're

heading in the right direction. However, in a word of warning to prospective blitzers, you may find that planning what to do with 40+ keen gardeners when they descend on your house one Sunday morning with all manner of tools, skills, food and expectations the most challenging aspect of the whole enterprise. Plan this bit carefully if you do nothing else! (don't however, do nothing else! You will regret it). A small team who knows the design as well as what's going to happen when will be of great help in this regard.



The team composting and mulching

We decided to try to keep the costs as low as possible, which meant using recycled or free materials as much as possible. In



the end we had to pay for some second hand bricks and water tanks. But you'll be surprised how much free or unwanted soil, compost, horse manure, wood, mulch, newspaper, carpet, cardboard, tools, and other stuff is available if you just ask around. Websites like www.freecycle.org and 'construction connect' (<http://www.arrnetwork.com.au/>) proved pretty useful here too.

So was it a success? Yes absolutely. It happened. A lot of people got excited about permaculture

and urban sustainability. We had fun. Our house in Glebe now had a yard which at the end of one day, was further along the way to being a fully fledged permaculture backyard than it would have been with months of work ourselves. And we made heaps of friends!

Was it perfect? No, far from it. It was a little chaotic and disorganised on the day. The herbs and corn were a bit mixed up and we didn't quite make it to the water tank stage... Apologies must be offered to those tireless troopers who spent an hour or more knee deep in freshly soiled horse hay – I forgot to pick it up until pretty late in all the preparations and never quite got around to composting it properly. And the plans for being able to offer little training sessions on everything from no-dig-gardening to guerrilla seed bombing buckled and finally were swept away by the sheer number of enthusiastic participants with tools in hand! But in the end, these would never be the markers of success. If a second blitz happens, we will count our first blitz as a success. If this leads to a third we will be all the happier. And if we can come back in a few years time from Timor Leste (from where we now write this recollection) to a Sydney where the permablitzing scene is strong enough for us to hop on board and continue blitzing backyards (ours and others!), well shall consider our string beans to have truly come home to roost. So to speak...



The new garden, no weeds and some wonderful no dig garden beds!



DIY

6 Weeks out Needs Analysis

- Pick a date for your Permablitz
- At this stage you should arrange a consultation with a Permaculture designer to work out needs, wants and capabilities. This is best done by organising a site analysis by Permaculture designer. It is also important at this stage to give the designer a budget range so that they design your garden accordingly

4 weeks out Design

- At this stage you should get back to the Permaculture designer in order to view and discuss their design for your garden. You will need to finalise this design and make sure it integrates all of your needs and wants

2 weeks out Preparation and Organisation

- Create a list of all the materials and resources that you will need.
- Begin the promotion of your Permablitz
- Start to grow seedlings to plant on the day
- Ask your designer to draw you up a design that is easy to read and understand so that you will be able to successfully create your permagarden

Permablitz

- Weed and Clear
- Create Garden beds
- Plant
- Mulch and compost
- Have a good time!

After

- Make sure to thank everyone who helped with your Permablitz
- Possibly arrange a follow up consultation with your Permaculture designer 1-6 months after your Permablitz to make sure your garden is functioning to its full extent

6 Weeks out

Needs Analysis

At six weeks out you will need to pick a date for your Permablitz. You will also need to create a list of what you would like in your garden, to give to your Permaculture designer. Below are some suggestions of some things you could plant and what you will need to plant or have in your garden

Ideas:

Vegetables		Herbs	Fruit
Beetroot	Peas	Basil	Mulberry
Broccoli	Pumpkins	Chives	Strawberries
Bok Choy	Radishes	Oregano	Raspberries
Cabbage	Sliver beet	Rosemary	Apples
Cauliflower	Spinach	Marjoram	Lemons
Celery	Squash	Sage	Oranges
Eggplant	Tomatoes	Thyme	Passionfruit
Lettuce	Zucchini	Coriander	

You might also like to create a worm farm. These are an excellent source of rich organic plant food. You can get kits from you local nursery or [IDEP](#) has an easy step by step guide for creating your own.

Needs:

Flowers

It is important to have blooming flowers all year round, to attract the bees and butterflies to pollinate. It is advisable that you plant brightly coloured flowers attract more butterflies.

Beans

Even if you don't like beans they provide lots of nitrogen for the soil, so even if you don't eat them you can use them as mulch and for your compost.

Compost

A good compost is a must in a Permaculture garden. It is very easy to set up your own, [IDEP](#) has a fantastic step by step guide of how to set up your own, as well as some trouble shooting suggestions.

Finding a Permaculture designer

To find a Permaculture designer you might like to contact a Permaculture group. There are quite a few in Sydney. These two groups will be able to give you more information and help you to get in contact with a Permaculture designer:



Permaculture North: <http://www.permaculturenorth.org.au/>



Permaculture Sydney Basin: <http://www.permaculturesydneybasin.org.au/psb/index.htm>

4 Weeks out

Design

At this stage you should meet again with your designer to see how your design is coming along and if all of your needs and wants are being addressed. If you are not able to find a Permaculture designer it is ok you can still create a working garden! Below are some tips for designing your own garden.

Size

Start small, maybe 1m² or 1-2m in diameter for a round garden. It is always easier to start small and grow then overwhelm yourself with a big garden.

Location

Choose a location that is not too sunny or too shady, a spot that receives both shade and sun that is close to your kitchen would be perfect.

The Permaculture zone principle

Zone	Where is this zone	What is best put in this zone
0	Your house	Here you could think about installing things such as solar panels, rain harvesting systems and water saving devices.
1	This is the zone that is closest to your house and that has the most used tracks, i.e. the places that you walk most regularly e.g. to get to your front gate, compost bin or garbage bins	Here you should place the plants that need the most attention and that you will use most, e.g. herbs, soft fruits such as strawberries or raspberries and salad vegetables.
2	This area is the next closest area, just outside the areas where you walk most frequently	The best plants to place in this zone are ones that don't need as much maintenance as the ones in zone 1 but do need some occasional care, such as pest and weed control or pruning. Perennial plants are best here.
3*	Further away again than zone 2	This is where the bulk of your plants will be grown. Here put the ones that need the least maintenance and care.
4*	Semi wild	This zone is mainly used for forage and collecting wild food .
5*	Wild	No human intervention is needed in this zone, it includes areas such as forests or bush land.

*In a city block it is most probable that you won't have zones 4 or 5, you may not even be able to have a zone 3.

Companion planting

Companion planting is the idea that you place plants together that will help each other and reduce the need for pesticides. Here are a few examples:

	Broad beans	corn	peas
Marjoram	✓	✓	✓
Chives	✗	o	✗
Onions	✗	o	✗
Potatoes	✓	✓	✓

Key:

✓ good together

✗ not good together

O neither good nor bad

[IDEP](#) has a very comprehensive chart to help you select plants that are compatible.

Herb spiral

This is a great way to fit lots of herbs in a small area and also can help to accommodate herbs that need different amounts of water and shade. It takes the form of a 3D spiral, with the herbs that need the least water at the top and the ones that need the most water at the bottom and the ones that need the most sun on the side that receives the most sun and those that need shade on the opposite side. You should plant it close to your kitchen, as this way you will tend to use more herbs.

1. Place rocks or bricks around the outside of the spiral (a circle with a 1.5m diameter is usually best).
2. Line the inside with newspaper (or you could use plastic sheets leading to a pond to catch all of the excess water).
3. Using soil that is rich in compost and organic matter start to build up the spiral, compacting the soil every 10cm, you can use small rocks to help you to keep the taper, and keep the shape, of your spiral
4. When planting your herbs choose the ones that like the least water and the most sun for the top (e.g. Thyme, Sage, Aloe, Oregano or Tarragon) and the ones that need the most water for the bottom (e.g. Mint, Basil, Parsley or Coriander) and herbs that like the most sun should be planted on the northern side of your spiral. For a bigger list of herbs and where they are best planted see Permaculturevision.com.
5. Keep your spiral well watered, as they can dry out quite easily.

2 Weeks out

Preparation and Organisation

At this stage you will need to start organising a list of what you will need for the day, promoting your Perma blitz and planting seedlings. At this stage it is also important to either ask your designer for a hard copy of your design or draw up your own.

Things you will need

On the day there are approximately 8 main things that you will need on the day. You can ask people to bring these or possibly source them from businesses or organisations.

1. Seedlings/seeds/cuttings

At this time you will not only need to start growing your own seedlings but also create a list of all of the plants that you want to have in your gardens and during your promotion specifically ask for these plants. People will prefer to bring cuttings, seeds or seedlings that they know will be used, therefore it is best to state exactly what you would like so that you avoid double-ups etc.

2. Compost

You will need lots of compost, enough to cover all of your garden beds with 5cms. This gives your soil a boost of nutrients and allows your new seedlings to thrive.

3. Mulch

You will need mulch to use as a top layer over all of your garden beds to retain moisture, prevent weeds and protect the soil from erosion. You can use hay, grass clippings, dry leaves, sawdust, woodchips, shredded paper etc.

4. Newspaper

You will need lots of newspaper to lay as a base for your garden beds; you will need a thick layer (3-4 sheets) with no holes to cover the entire garden bed. This is to stop the weeds from working their way through into your new perma garden.

5. Tools

You will need an assortment of tools including trowels, forks, spades, 'cultivator' (somewhat like a pitch fork), lawn mower etc. The tools you will need will depend on what you plan to do at your Perma blitz. It is also advised that you tell people to bring their own gloves; spider bites are not too fun!

6. Water

You will need access to water for your garden at the end of the day. Therefore you will either need a watering can and/or a hose, preferably with a spray nozzle.

7. People




You will definitely need people to help you with your Perma blitz. Some suggestions for promotion are below

8. Lunch

All perma blitzers need fuel so a yummy lunch is a must, having a big shared lunch always adds a bit more fun to the day! You might like to ask people to bring some things to share.

Promotion

You will need to promote your Permablitz so that lots of people come and share the fun. Some good ways of doing this are:

-  A flyer: create a flyer and ask if you can put it up around your local area. Some good places are nurseries, community gardens, local notice boards, shop windows and community centres.
-  E-mail: there are many different Permaculture email lists (Friends of the Earth has one you can join). You can send an email through one of these lists or to all of your friends and work mates. This is a great way to spread the word far and fast, without using any paper!
-  Local radio stations and newspapers: you might like to try calling your local radio station or newspaper and ask them to give your Permablitz a mention

Design

It is important that you have at least one hard copy of your design that is very clear and easy to read. This will save a lot of time and energy on the day as you won't need to keep explaining where things need to go.

Sourcing

There are many businesses and organisations that will probably be willing to give you what you will need for your garden for nothing or next to nothing.

Police stables: These are great for getting old hay, for mulch, and manure for free. Just make sure to ask if the horses have been wormed recently, in the last few days, as the antibiotics in the manure will kill important microbes in the soil

Local community gardens: They will probably either have seeds or mulch etc that they will be willing to give you or know of places locally that can donate to your Permablitz

Local Shops: you might like to ask your local shops if they throw out newspapers. They will probably be willing to give them to you to use on your garden

Restaurants: Many restaurants in Sydney do not have the space to have compost; you could ask your local restaurants if you can have their kitchen scraps to add to your compost

Botanical Gardens and nurseries: You also might like to speak the Sydney Botanical Gardens, nurseries and even National Park rangers to see if they would be willing to donate seeds or seedlings to your Permablitz

Permablitz

It is best to have a really clear idea of what you want to achieve at your Permablitz, this will make the day much easier. Remember, Permablitz is meant to be fun, so don't forget to take lots of breaks for lunch and snacks. Some ideas for that might help your Permablitz run smoothly are:

- 🍓 Make sure you have a copy of your design posted up somewhere that is easy to see, this will help everyone understand what you have in mind and what is needed to be done
- 🍓 Create a list of jobs to do. People will be happier if they have something to do, rather than standing around. Some jobs might include weeding, planting, mulching or clearing
- 🍓 Have a quick briefing at the beginning of your Permablitz, once again so that everyone understands what is to be done, and also to save you from answering the same questions many times
- 🍓 You might also want to post up some info about Permaculture and some of the ideas surrounding it, in order to educate people and to give them an understanding of why and how you are transforming your yard.

Creating a garden bed

1. You will need to decide the exact position of your garden bed/s will be. You might like to mark them out.
2. Create a boarder around your garden beds by digging a shallow trench and placing rocks, stones, bricks or wooden sleepers*, into the trench and fill in the gaps either side, you could also use a boarder plant such as lemon grass.
3. In the areas where your garden is going you will need to remove all the weeds. It is also a good idea to weed your whole yard, to help prevent the spread of weeds.
4. Break up the soil and grass where you garden bed will be. You will probably need a 'cultivator' to do this.
5. Once the soil is broken up place a layer of newspaper, approximately 3 sheets thick, over entire bed area, making sure to not leave any holes where weeds can creep through.
6. Give the newspaper a good water.
7. Cover over the newspaper with at least 5cm of compost.
8. Plant your seedlings and cuttings** according to your design. You might also want to label them.
9. Cover entire bed with a thick layer of mulch, approximately 5-10cm, but make sure not to cover over your newly planted seedlings!
10. Give your new garden bed a good water.

* if you do use wood make sure it is not treated with chemicals, as they might not be safe to have near your edible plants ** Seedlings and cuttings are more likely to survive but you can also use seeds

After

Water

You will need to water your garden regularly, at least once a week. Some plants, such as your herbs may need more watering. Make sure to monitor your new permagarden to make sure it doesn't get too dry

Weeding

You should try to keep the weeds at bay in your new garden as this will allow your edible produce to thrive. Maintaining a good layer of mulch will help you with this.

Pest control

5 ways to protect your garden from pests

1. **Insectary plant** – plant acts as a host (a food plant) for predatory insects which prey on the crop pests.
2. **Sacrificial plant** – pests attack this plant preferentially & other plants escape severe predation.
3. **All season host** – pests, over winter, live in this type of plant enabling them to build up larger populations, therefore avoid planting these plants.
4. **Predator or pollinator attractor plant** – these crops or hedges provides flowers to feed the adult predators.
5. **Trap crops** – some crops attract & kill pests, or the pests can be caught or destroyed on these crops, e.g. Venus fly traps. (Source: B Mollison with R.M. Slay, Introduction to Permaculture, 1991).

Composting and mulching



To keep your new garden at its best you will need to maintain the ground cover, so whenever there is soil exposed cover it over with some fresh compost and then a new layer of mulch.

Time staggered planting

By time staggering your planting, i.e. staggering when you plant your seedlings, you will help prevent a sudden abundance of produce and then a long spell of nothing. Time staggered planting will ensure year round fresh fruit and vegetables.

Harvesting

There are two main ways to know when your plants are ready to be harvested:

-  Birds and other animals will also be trying to eat your fruit or vegetables
-  By looking at the colour and smelling the fruit, you will be able to tell if they are ripe

Recipes

PUMPKIN SOUP – SERVES APPROX. 6

Ingredients from your garden:

- 1 med/large pumpkin, deseeded, peeled and chopped
- 2 brown onions, diced
- 2 cup vegetable stock**
- 1 sprig thyme

1. Heat a little oil in a large pot
2. Add onion and cook until browned
3. To the pot add the pumpkin, thyme and the stock
4. When it begins to boil reduce to a simmer until the pumpkin is tender (about 20-30 minutes)
5. Transfer to a blender or food processor and blend until smooth
6. Transfer the soup back into the pot and bring to a simmer
7. Serve*

*To make your soup creamier you can add ½ cup of cream or milk

**You can make your own vegetable stock from your garden by boiling up an onion, some carrots, parsnips, celery, leeks and garlic in 3 litres of water and then straining after an hour

TABOULI

Ingredients from your garden:

- ½ cup lemon juice
- 3 large tomatoes, deseeded and finely cubed
- 1 large cucumber, finely cubed
- 3 shallots, finely sliced
- 4 cups flat leaf parsley, finely sliced stalks and roughly chopped leaves
- 1/3 cup mint leaves, roughly chop

Ingredients not from your garden

- ¼ cup burghul
- ¼ cup olive oil

1. Place burghul in a bowl and cover with water
 2. Leave to stand for at least an hour
 3. Drain burghul and squeeze out any excess water
 4. Wisk olive oil and lemon juice in the bottom of a large mixing bowl and until well combined
 5. Add tomato, cucumber, shallots, parsley, mint and the burghul last
 6. Stir until all ingredients are all coated in the oil and lemon juice
 7. Serve as a salad, as a side or as a sandwich filler
-

EASY PASTA SAUCE- MAKES APPROX 1 CUP

Ingredients from your garden:

- 8 large tomatoes, diced
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 sprig basil
- 1 sprig oregano

Ingredients not from your garden:

- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper

1. In a frying pan heat a little olive oil
 2. Add onion and garlic and cook until lightly browned
 3. Add tomatoes, basil and oregano and cook until tomatoes are very soft
 4. Transfer to a blender or food processor and mix until smooth- this step is optional if you prefer your pasta sauce more 'rustic'
 5. Transfer back to fry pan bring to simmer and season to taste
 6. Serve with pasta or let cool and store either frozen or refrigerated to use in other recipes
-

VEGETABLE CASSOULET

Ingredients from your garden:

- 1 cup of beans (bortolli, great northern, kidney or any other type of bean or a mixture)- if dried they will need to be soaked over night
- 4 shallots, halved and sliced
- 3 cloves of garlic crushed
- 2 large carrots, roughly chopped
- 1 cup vegetable stock*
- 2 medium zucchini, roughly chopped
- 700g pasta sauce
- 1 sprig of thyme
- 1 tablespoon parsley, chopped

Topping:

- 800g potatoes, skinned and chopped

Ingredients not from your garden:

- Olive oil
- 60g butter
- ¼ cup parmesan

Other optional ingredients:

- Mushrooms add at step 3
- Any meat- cooked until brown and add as first ingredient at step 3

1. Preheat oven to 180°C
2. Place a large flameproof casserole dish, that has a lid, on stove
3. Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil and add shallots, garlic and carrots and cook until just tender
4. Add stock and bring to boil
5. Reduce to a simmer until liquid has reduced by ½
6. Add beans, zucchini, pasta sauce and thyme and return to boil
7. Place lid on and put into oven to cook for 50 minutes
8. In the mean time steam potato
9. When tender take off heat and place into a small bowl
10. To the potato add parsley, butter and parmesan and mash until smooth
11. When cassoulet has been in for 50 minutes, remove from oven and top with mashed potato
12. Place back into oven, this time with the lid off, and bake for 10 minutes or until the potato is lightly brown
13. Remove and let stand for 10-15 minutes
14. Serve

***To make this recipe richer the stock can be replaced with white wine**

SUPER EASY DAIRY FREE BANANA AND BERRY ICE-CREAM

Ingredients from your garden:

- 2 large ripe banana
- 2 handful of berries (any berries are ripe in your garden), well washed

1. Peel banana and break into pieces
2. Place banana pieces and berries into airtight container and put into the freezer for at least an hour preferably overnight
3. Remove from the freezer and place into a blender or food processor
4. Blend until very smooth
5. Return mixture to container* and place back into freezer for another 20-30 minutes
6. Serve

***Instead of putting the mixture into the original container you can divide the mixture into iceblock tray and put paddle pop stick in to each make individual serve ice-creams**

What else can I do?

Spread the word of Permablitz and help a friend organise their own

Have a dinner with friends and the people who helped at your Permablitz using produce from your garden

Grey Water

This is a great way of harvesting water that has been used in your house, from dishwashers, washing machines or showers, that can be used again. To do this you will need to install a system to catch and store the water. The government offers some rebates for this. You should contact your local council or Sydney Water for more information.

Dripper watering system

Drip irrigation is an effective and efficient way of watering your garden. It consists of a series of hoses, with tiny holes in them, that run along the ground to deliver water right to the roots of your plants. Many hardware stores and nurseries have kits you can purchase or you could make your own. The ABC's Gardening Australia has a [fact sheet](#) to help you set up your own system.

Urban orchards

An urban orchard is basically a food swap. People come together weekly or monthly etc, to swap their backyard fruit and vegetable surplus. This is a great way to make sure that all of your hard work doesn't go to waste when you have excess produce as well as giving you access to different edibles. It is also a fantastic way to meet likeminded people and create Permaculture, of the social kind.

Seed sharing and seed banks

You might also like to share seeds or create a seed bank among a larger group. To do this you will need to allow some of your plants to go to seed, then collect the seeds and share them or store them for later use.

Join your local food co-operative

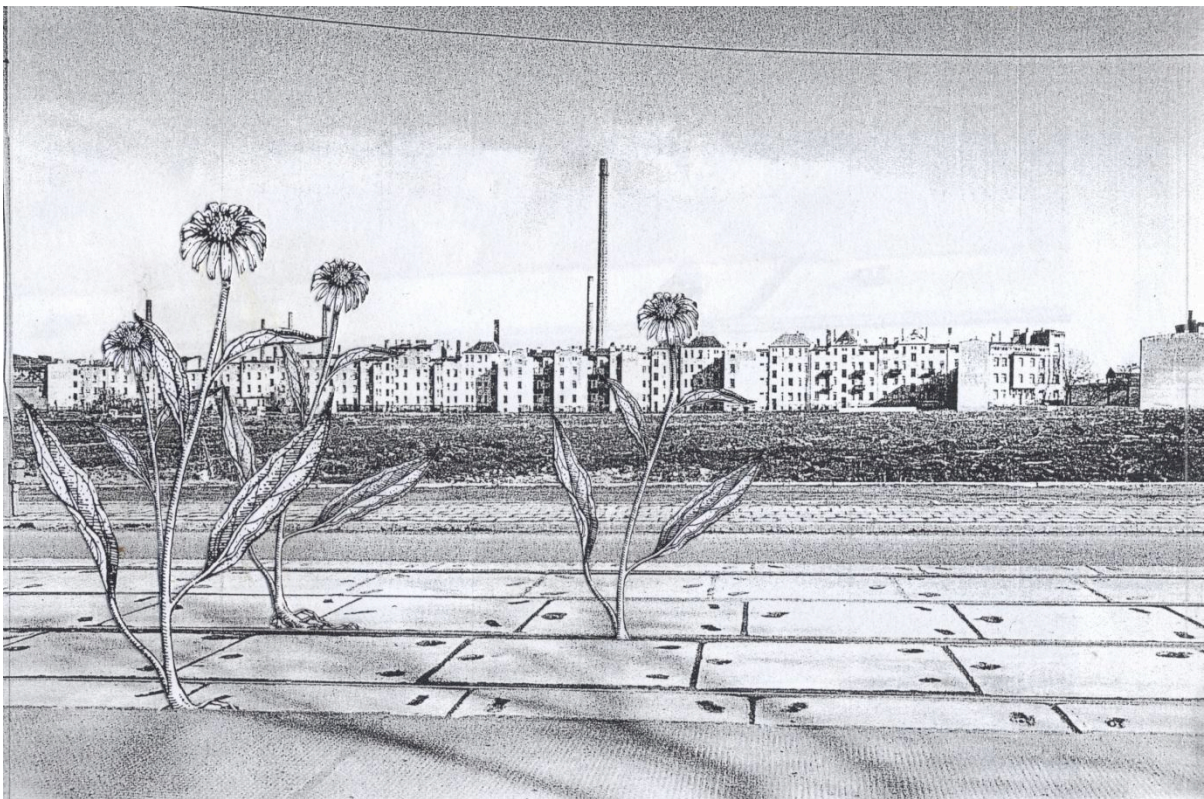
In Newtown, Alfalfa House is a not-for-profit cooperative that aims to provide, where possible, minimally packaged and minimally processed, affordable, wholesome, organic food to its members. Most of what the co-op sells is unpackaged. You bring your own containers and scoop, pour or ladle out the exact amount you want. Neither you nor the environment pay for unnecessary packaging. As well, you only buy what you need - the price per kilo is the same whether you buy 5 grams or 5 kilos! The co-op prefers ethically and environmentally sound products and checks with suppliers to ensure the conditions and methods under which the goods are grown and processed meet those standards. As much as possible we buy goods produced by organic/biodynamic methods and by other co-ops. Open 7 days at 113 Enmore Road Enmore NSW 2042. There are also food co-operatives in Katoomba, Sydney University, UTS, UNSW, Manly and more.

Get Active! Be part of vibrant community movements for justice and change.

Whatever your background or skills, there is a place for you. Participate in the Friends of the Earth Sydney collective, and sign up to our e-list (contact foesydney@gmail.com). Be part of reclaiming the food chain and glorious grassroots campaigning for environmental justice! Friends of the Earth Sydney also campaigns on coal and climate change, for land justice and a nuclear free future, and more. Become a member, sign up for the Friends of the Earth Australia national magazine *Chain Reaction* and come along to one of our community events or weekly meetings. Contact holly.creenaune@foe.org.au / 0417 682 541.

Install solar panels at your work or home



Become a member and get in touch with the Sydney Energy Cooperative to install solar panels and energy efficiency measures at your work or home. The Sydney Energy Co-operative is a not-for-profit environmental organisation aiming to involve the community in energy-related activities. The Energy Cooperative is all about linking a concerned public with practical activities that benefit the environment. www.energycoop.com.au










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Further Information



Friends of the Earth

-  Friends of the Earth Australia <http://www.foe.org.au/about-us>
-  Adelaide Friends of the Earth's Radical Cheerleading Squad and their food cheers <http://www.adelaide.foe.org.au/?p=175>

Permaculture

-  David Holmgren was one of the pioneers of Permaculture , *Essence of Permaculture*, a free e-book, which gives an in depth outline of the 12 principles as well as other fundamentals of Permaculture <http://www.holmgren.com.au>
-  For all you need to know about Permaculture and ideas surrounding Permaculture <http://www.permaculture.net/>
-  This site offers online courses and information, some free, about Permaculture principles, design and sustainability <http://www.permaculturevisions.com/>
-  The Permaculture research Institute <http://www.permaculture.org.au/>
-  This site gives a ten step guide to creating your own no-dig garden <http://www.safecom.org.au/permaculture.htm>
-  Yayasan IDEP foundation is an Indonesian non-profit group concerned with sustainability. They have some fantastic downloads to do with Permaculture, organic gardening, composting, companion planting and much more <http://www.idepfoundation.org>
-  Transition Sydney is a group that is concerned with climate change. They have a lot of information about climate change, peak oil and Permaculture <http://transitionsydney.org/>

Permablitz and Urban Gardens

-  This is the site of an Australian Permablitz group; this site mainly discusses blitzes and events occurring in Melbourne and other areas of Victoria, but has a lot of really interesting and useful information <http://www.permablitz.net/>
-  This article discusses the background of Permablitz and the ideas that surround it <http://permablitz.net/content/view/17/>
-  This is an article that looks at Permablitzes in Melbourne <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2007/07/16/1184559700758.html>
-  Growing Power is an interesting example of urban gardens creating social connections. It is a non-profit organisation that supports people from diverse backgrounds by helping to provide equal access to healthy, high-quality, safe and affordable food. <http://www.growingpower.org/>
-  This is another example of successful urban agriculture movement. The Food Project is based in Boston and aims to bring people together in order to build a sustainable food system. <http://www.thefoodproject.org/about/index.asp>

Peak oil

- 🍅 These sites discuss peak oil theory:
<http://www.energybulletin.net/primer.php>
<http://www.lifeaftertheoilcrash.net/>
- 🍅 Both of these sites discuss the film *Power of the community: How Cuba survived Peak Oil*.
http://globalpublicmedia.com/the_power_of_community_how_cuba_survived_peak_oil
<http://www.powerofcommunity.org/cm/index.php>
- 🍅 If you would like to know more about the ways that climate change is affecting the Australian agriculture industry this is an outline published by the Australian government
<http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/impacts/agriculture.html>
- 🍅 'Power of the Community: How Cuba Survived Peak oil' 2006, DVD, Alchemy House Production Inc, USA

Other

Food Security and sustainability

- 🥕 Friends of the Earth Australia's site has a page that discusses the environmental sustainability of food and farming practices <http://www.foe.org.au/sustainable-food>
- 🥕 Earth Pledge is a non- profit organisation that advocates sustainable food practices
<http://www.eathpledge.org/f2f/>
- 🥕 Farm Folk/City Folk is a group that is Canadian based and is working towards re-localising the food system. The site has lots of information about local food and sustainable food practices
<http://www.ffcf.bc.ca>
- 🥕 Community Food Security Coalition is an American non-profit organisation that targets social and economic justice and sustainable agriculture among many other issues. This link looks at food security, issues surrounding the idea. http://www.foodsecurity.org/views_cfs_faq.html
- 🥕 Facts, background and some Australian responses to the issue of food Security
<http://www.globaleducation.edna.edu.au/globaled/go/cache/offonce/pid/177>

Organic farming

- 🐛 This is a site produced by the Australian Government and has a lot of information about organic farming in Australia <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/farm/organic>
- 🐛 The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements <http://www.ifoam.org/>
- 🐛 The Biological Farmers of Australia, this site has information about organics in Australian and where to buy organic products <http://www.bfa.com.au/>

Miscellaneous

- 🍅 This is a good little article about starting growing vegetables; it is not based on Permaculture principles but has some good tips about choosing plants for shady cold areas, drainage and soil. <http://bean-sprouts.blogspot.com/2008/01/get-started-growing-vegetables.html>
- 🍅 This site discusses an urban orchard project in the inner suburbs of Melbourne. It has some interesting information about organic gardening and is a great idea for how to take Permaculture further and share your knowledge and your produce <http://www.ceres.org.au/farm/urbanorchard/index.html>
- 🍅 This site gives a list of markets worldwide including farmers markets, flea markets and street markets <http://www.openair.org>
- 🍅 This is an American based group that looks at local produce, why you should buy it and how to buy it. <http://www.foodroutes.org>
- 🍅 This is an American based site that lists community gardens throughout the USA. However, if you do not live in the USA it also has a lot of interesting and useful information about starting and maintaining community gardens as well as tips for gardening with kids, seed saving and many other related topics. <http://www.communitygarden.org>
- 🍅 The Australian City Farms and Community Network is the Australian equivalent of this group <http://www.communitygarden.org.au/>
- 🍅 The Australian community foods site gives a list of community gardens throughout Australia <http://www.communityfoods.org.au/>
- 🍅 This book discusses all the issues surrounding peak oil, climate change, agriculture and countries who have already experienced the crisis
Pfeiffer D 2006, 'Eating Fossil Fuels: Oil, Food and the Coming Crisis in Agriculture', New Society Publishers, Canada



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