

# THE KEYS TO A GREAT COMMUNITY GARDEN

All gardens start with dirt. In cities, where contaminants are prevalent, soil testing and remediation are a must. If you're growing edibles, bring in fresh soil and build **(1) raised beds** out of wood or concrete blocks. Then set up a **(2) composting** system to fertilize soil. Mulch is handy for weed-free **(3) pathways** between beds. Gardens on old tenement lots often have leftover brick for **(4) public walkways**. In wet climates, opt for gravel or permeable paving. **(5) Water** is a necessity. Locales like New York City provide hydrant access, but **(6) rain barrels** help conserve municipal supplies. **(7) Shaded seating** and communal areas welcome neighbors and give relief to sweaty gardeners. A **(8) grill** or outdoor kitchen facilitates gatherings; many gardens host workshops and performances. In others, the arts are integrated through **(9) sculptures** and murals. Invite wildlife in with trees and maybe a landscaped **(10) pond** with a filter powered by **(11) solar panels**. Good **(12) fences** make good neighbors, and a sign that states the garden's name, hours, contacts, and calendar says, "We're here!" Where theft is prevalent, a lock on the gate is essential. You'll want one on the **(13) toolshed**, too. Fence-side ornamentals—especially native **(14) flowering shrubs** that attract pollinators or help feed the residents of your **(15) bee boxes**—beautify the neighborhood. And since kids are the future of the movement, dedicated **(16) children's beds** help pass on the skills.

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL HILL

