

## **Holiday Gardening Gift Ideas from the Greenhouse Show Team**

The holiday season is approaching, and finding thoughtful gifts for the gardeners in your life can be tricky. Last week, a listener asked me to put together a list of our favorite gardening gift ideas. I'll admit I'm a bit biased—being a practical person, I naturally gravitate toward tools and items that actually get used in the garden. The list leans that direction, but all these gifts are helpful, affordable, and gardener-approved. And just to be clear, I'm not paid for any of these recommendations and am not endorsing any specific companies—these are simply items I've found genuinely useful.

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### **UV-Resistant Garden Markers**

One of my biggest frustrations when growing my own plants is that the writing on plant tags fades long before the end of the season. A few companies now sell UV-resistant garden markers that hold up much better outdoors. I've also had good luck with Sharpie Pro permanent markers—they often last the entire season. You can pick up a pack for under \$10.

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### **Japanese Gardening Knife (Hori-Hori Knife)**

A Hori-Hori knife is one of the most versatile tools you can own. It looks like a narrow, heavy-duty transplanting trowel, with inch marks on the blade and both a serrated and smooth edge. It's excellent for planting bulbs, cutting sod, measuring mulch depth, dividing perennials, or even opening bags of soil. Prices generally range from \$13–\$30. Fiskars makes a solid entry-level model for around \$15 at many local retailers and online.

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### **Seed-Starting Kits**

Seed-starting kits make it easy to start your own flowers and vegetables indoors. Most include a tray, an insert or pony packs with individual cells, and a clear plastic dome to cover the tray; some come with seed-starting mix. If you already have good natural light or grow lights, basic kits start around \$10. More advanced versions with built-in LED lights start closer to \$40. At this time of year, these are usually easier to find online, but local stores begin carrying them again in late winter.

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### **Gardening Apron**

A gardening apron solves an everyday annoyance: not having a place to put twine, pruners, plant labels, a hand trowel, or your phone while you're outside. These heavy-duty aprons—usually made of canvas—have multiple pockets and sometimes even a large pouch for collecting vegetables. They typically cost \$15–\$40 and are widely available online.

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### **Portable Gardening Bench / Kneeler**

As mobility becomes more of a consideration, a lightweight foldable gardening bench quickly becomes a favorite tool. When upright, you can sit on it; flip it over, and you have a cushioned kneeler. It's great for weeding, planting, or harvesting. While you may need to order one online during the winter, most garden centers stock them in the growing season. Prices range from \$20–\$30.

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### **Battery-Powered Pruners**

Rechargeable battery technology has improved dramatically over the past five years, and many tool brands—Milwaukee, DeWalt, Ryobi, Cobalt, and Craftsman—now offer battery-powered hedge trimmers, mini chainsaws, and pruning tools that use the same batteries as their drills and saws. If you have a lot of pruning to do, these tools can save time and reduce strain on your body. Contractor-grade options from Milwaukee and DeWalt run about \$200–\$300 with a battery, but store brands like Ryobi or Craftsman are often a third less and work well for occasional to moderate use. There are also inexpensive off-brand models online that work fine for occasional pruning. For older gardeners, these tools can make yard work far more manageable.

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