

This Old House

Bright Ideas

Inspiring looks and DIY projects for indoors and out

Stenciled staircase
Refresh your deck
Raised-bed gardens
Safer paint strippers
Brookline TV project preview

TOH TOP 20
Best New Lawn & Garden Products





'Green Halo' Peony

Paeonia lactiflora 'Green Halo'

Peonies are prized for their lavishly layered petals in signature shades of pink, red, and white. They're also extremely drought tolerant, cold hardy, and not loved by deer, which find the foliage and stems too fibrous.

OUR PICK: We love frilly 'Green Halo' for its apple-green skirt (though some gardeners complain it lacks vigor). Another stunner: striated hot-pink-and-white 'Candy Stripe.'

WHAT IT NEEDS: Full sun and nutrient-rich, slightly alkaline, well-drained soil

HARDINESS ZONES: 3 to 8



'Tomato Soup' Coneflower

Echinacea 'Tomato Soup'

This native prairie flower blooms all summer. Its hairy, aromatic foliage deters deer, as do the spiny seed heads beloved by birds.

OUR PICK: Hot-red 'Tomato Soup' is one of the newer varieties that are generally sterile and come in rainbow hues (purple-flowering *Echinacea purpurea* freely self-sows). Others worth noting are golden-to-white 'Mellow Yellows' and lime-to-pink 'Green Envy.'

WHAT IT NEEDS: Full to partial sun and dry to average, well-drained soils; will tolerate clay

HARDINESS ZONES: 3 to 8



'Patty's Plum' Oriental Poppy

Papaver orientale 'Patty's Plum'

Deer usually pass over poppies, thanks to their thistle-like foliage and toxic sap. But for the rest of us, their huge crinkly blooms with dark centers are impossible to ignore. Since both spring flowers and foliage die back, they are best interplanted with bushy summer bloomers like asters or Russian sage.

OUR PICK: 'Patty's Plum' adds extra drama, flowering in a rare reddish purple.

WHAT IT NEEDS: Full sun and fertile, well-drained soil

HARDINESS ZONES: 3 to 7



'Mango Popsicle' Torch Lily

Kniphofia Popsicle® 'Mango Popsicle'

It's surprising that long-blooming, fast-growing, undemanding torch lily isn't more common. Occasionally deer nibble on the flowers, but the unpalatable texture of its grassy foliage usually prevents browsing.

OUR PICK: 'Mango Popsicle' sports eye-catching, long-lasting, 30-inch-tall flower spikes from June until frost.

WHAT IT NEEDS: Full sun and average, well-drained soil

HARDINESS ZONES: 6 to 9



'Harlequin Gem' Hellebore

Helleborus x hybridus Winter Jewels®

'Harlequin Gem'

In late winter these dainty woodland flowers nod above tufts of evergreen foliage. But as hellebores are poisonous, they may not be a good choice where pets and children roam.

OUR PICK: Garnet-toned 'Harlequin Gem' is a standout in the Winter Jewels series, as are chartreuse 'Jade Tiger' and 'Black Diamond.'

WHAT IT NEEDS: Full to partial shade and well-drained soil

HARDINESS ZONES: 4 to 8



'Chuck Hayes' Gardenia

Gardenia jasminoides 'Chuck Hayes'

Summer-blooming evergreen shrubs, gardenias are perfect foundation plantings but are also compact enough for containers. And while their flowers' strong perfume captivates people, it repels deer.

OUR PICK: 'Chuck Hayes' is a cold-hardy cultivar that has stretched the boundaries of this southern classic; 'Frostproof' is another.

WHAT IT NEEDS: Full to partial sun and acidic, nutrient-rich, well-drained soil

HARDINESS ZONES: 7 to 11

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