



CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Master Gardener

Program Overview

The Master Gardener Certificate Program is a part-time, non-credit certificate program. The program consists of 78 hours of classroom training, followed by 70 hours of volunteer service. The classroom training component is typically delivered in a Saturday workshop format, and combines home study, classroom instruction and assignments. The student volunteer hours are individually scheduled and must be completed within a two year period.

The program is intended for the enthusiastic home gardener. It provides an opportunity to develop gardening knowledge and skills, and to share that expertise with the community. The aims of the Master Gardener Program reflect the mission of the Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association, which are:

- The provision of the most current and reliable environmentally responsible home gardening information available;
- The provision of the training necessary to prepare graduates to share that information with the gardening public.

Master Gardener Philosophy

The program is based on a multifaceted approach to gardening problems and emphasizes the promotion of plant health, the use of an environmentally responsible approach and the employment of integrated pest management. This reflects an underlying philosophy that we are stewards, not owners, of the land and that we can only work with nature, not control it. Master Gardeners promote sustainable solutions to gardening problems.

A collaboration between Vancouver Island University and Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association



Program Goals and Objectives

This program provides an opportunity to:

- Meet other gardeners in an atmosphere of sharing and exploration
- Fill gaps in your gardening knowledge
- Provide satisfying solutions to future gardening problems
- Learn where to find the answers to new challenges
- Give back to your community some of the joy that gardening has afforded you over the years

Program Dates

12 sessions: Saturday, September 7 – December 7, 2019
(no class on October 12 or November 9)

Program Location

GR Paine Horticultural Training Centre (Nanaimo)



VANCOUVER ISLAND
UNIVERSITY

Certificate for Master Gardener

Program Outline

CLASSROOM COMPONENT:

Advanced Gardener: Theory and Practice AMMG 023 (78 hrs)

Designed for enthusiastic home gardeners, this course provides an overview of gardening basics. Topics include: soils, composting, plant identification, shrubs, trees, perennials and annuals, berries, vegetables, plant propagation, pruning and weeds, pests, and their controls. The program emphasizes environmentally responsible gardening practices.

A series of qualified instructors, with particular expertise in each topic, provide in-depth information in the following modules. Vancouver Island Master Gardeners are available as mentors.

- Horticulture: Botany Basics
- Scientific Names and Plant Identification Systems
- Soil Science
- Organic Fruit and Vegetable Gardening
- Pruning
- Roses
- Plant Hardiness and Protection (Fire resistance)
- Plant Disease and Diagnosing Workshop
- Rhododendrons and Heath Companions
- Woody Landscape Plants: Trees & Shrubs for BC
- Home Orchards and Tree Fruits
- Plant Identification
- Herbaceous Ornamentals
- Sustainable Landscape Design, Xeriscaping & Native Plants
- Weed Management
- Composting and permaculture
- House Plants
- Propagation
- Lawns and Turf Grass
- Basic Entomology
- Invasive Species
- Integrated Pest Management and Least Toxic Solutions

- Mock Master Gardener Clinic Experience
- Various workshop topics

VOLUNTEER SERVICE COMPONENT:

Master Gardener in Training AMMG 030 (70 hrs)

Students participate in various clinics at nurseries, garden centres, garden tours, schools and community garden events. Students must complete 70 hours of volunteer service plus complete a plant identification project.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Advanced Gardener: Theory and Practice.

This course is the second component of the Master Gardener Certificate Program. Students who have successfully completed the theory course (AMMG 023) become Master Gardeners in Training and join the Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association (VIMGA), which provides and manages their 70 hours of volunteer opportunities over two years. Through the Association, students will begin to share their knowledge and passion about gardening with the community.

Opportunities for volunteering are provided in congenial settings at nurseries, garden shows, garden tours, and other related venues, with the support of Vancouver Island Master Gardeners who have completed their training. There are ongoing opportunities for both continuing education and socializing with like-minded gardeners. At the end of the 70 student hours of volunteering, the Master Gardener Certificate is awarded by Vancouver Island University, and the students become fully fledged Master Gardeners.

Note: On completion of the program, to remain a Master Gardener, membership in the local MG Association and a minimum volunteer commitment of 15 hours plus 5 hours of continuing education per year is required.

Admission Requirements

The requirements for entry into the program are as follows:

- Keen home gardener, prepared to share knowledge and enthusiasm with the gardening public
- May be required to successfully complete a qualifying quiz on basic gardening knowledge (typically completed at the info session)
- Be available on a number of weekends to complete volunteer hours over a two year period (typically between Apr - Sept)

How to Apply

Submit a VIU Application Form

Fees:

Tuition for the program is \$795 + tax. Full tuition must be paid at the time of registration. Tuition fee includes the Master Gardener Manual (USB format), Washington State University Extension.

- Fees are subject to change
- This program is not eligible for student loans

Graduation Requirements

To earn the Master Gardener Certificate, the student must:

- Successfully complete Advanced Gardener: Theory and Practice.
- Attend a minimum of 72 hours (of the total of 78 hours) of instruction
- Satisfactorily complete all assignments
- Attain a minimum mark of 80% on the final exam
- Successfully complete 70 hours of volunteer service (Master Gardener in Training) and plant identification project over a two-year period. The volunteer service component is coordinated by the Vancouver Island Master Gardeners Association.

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<https://pdt.viu.ca/master-gardener-program>