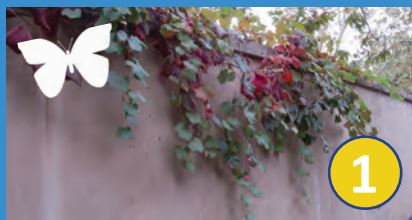




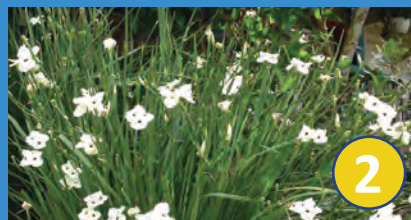
Kids, Pets, Fun and Friendly

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Pet and Kid Friendly Plants



1



2



3



4



5

1 Vitis 'Roger's Red'
Roger's Red Grape

2 Dietes bicolor
Fortnight Lily

3 Muhlenbergia rigens
Deer Grass

4 Teucrium fruticans 'Azureum'
Azureum Bush Germander

5 Asclepias fascicularis
Narrow Leaf Milkweed

Kid and Pet Friendly Style

gardens have family areas with living boundaries created by groups of plants or low evergreen hedges. Kids get safe, special places where they can go for some creative playtime.

A small Natural Lawn or walkable groundcover area could create an open space that uses less water than a traditional cool season lawn (see p. 13). Raised beds provide an opportunity to grow seasonal vegetables such as tomatoes, corn, or pumpkins. Flowering perennials attract birds and butterflies, so be sure to make provisions to keep away outdoor cats.

Add to the adventure by incorporating a dry creek bed or permeable pathways wide enough for trikes and bikes.

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Easy Perennial Containers



1 *Asparagus densiflorus 'Myers'*
Myers Asparagus Fern



2 *Cistanthe grandiflora*
Rock Purslane



3 *Pelargonium sidoides*
Geranium

Blooming all summer, and repeatedly throughout the year, bushy perennial plants will bring flowers, butterflies, and hummingbirds to sunny patio containers with just weekly watering and a gentle annual haircut.

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Secret areas and hideouts where kids or adults can gather and get away are essential for keeping people active in the garden. Consider growing a willow arbor, or installing a hut. Enclosing a hiding place, even if it is just with a low-growing hedge, is a good way to contain kids within the garden.

Low Growing Hedges



1 *Arctostaphylos 'Sunset'*
Sunset Manzanita



2 *Leucophyllum frutescens*
Texas Sage



3 *Abutilon palmeri*
Indian Mallow

Naturally low-growing hedges may be planted using a wide variety of drought-adapted shrubs that grow no taller than 3' - 4'. These can be used to screen seating areas or create kid-height enclosures with interiors easily seen from nearby patios and walkways.

Tips For Kid and Pet Friendly Style Gardens

1. **Organic Woodchip Mulch** throughout the planted and play areas provides soft landings and has the additional benefit of improving soil quality. Organic mulch is a preferred walking surface for dogs, and if contained by edging, makes a great running surface.

2. **Make A Small Natural Lawn** as a soft play surface, if your kids are into running around. Make sure to maintain it organically and manage your irrigation efficiently.

3. **Raised Beds For Seasonal Edibles** grow fun annual things like squash, pumpkins, and sun flowers.

4. **Avoid Fragile or Thorny Plants** because they will not withstand the pounding of lost balls or games of hide and seek. Planting poisonous plants is never a good idea if there are young people and pets around the garden.

5. **Big Rock Creekbeds** are better than piles of little stones that are easily picked up and thrown around. The additional benefit of big rocks is that they can be used as seating or for climbing.

6. **Natural Is OK** because it's easier to maintain, and provides more visual interest. Woody shrubs that are not cut back continually provide cover for nesting birds raising their young. Allow plants to hold on to their dried seed heads, and you will be rewarded by nature.

7. **Protect Special Plants** by adding some low fencing or by placing sticks vertically in garden beds. This is especially important in perennial flower beds that host the birds and butterflies you don't want disturbed by outdoor cats.

8. **Beware Of Burrs** from grasses that could get into pets' hair or become hurtful splinters for paws. Either cut grass seed heads regularly, or don't plant them at all.

9. **Keep Something Overgrown** or an area covered with leaves for your dog to forage in. They will thank you for remembering their wild side!

Dirt Diva Designs

