

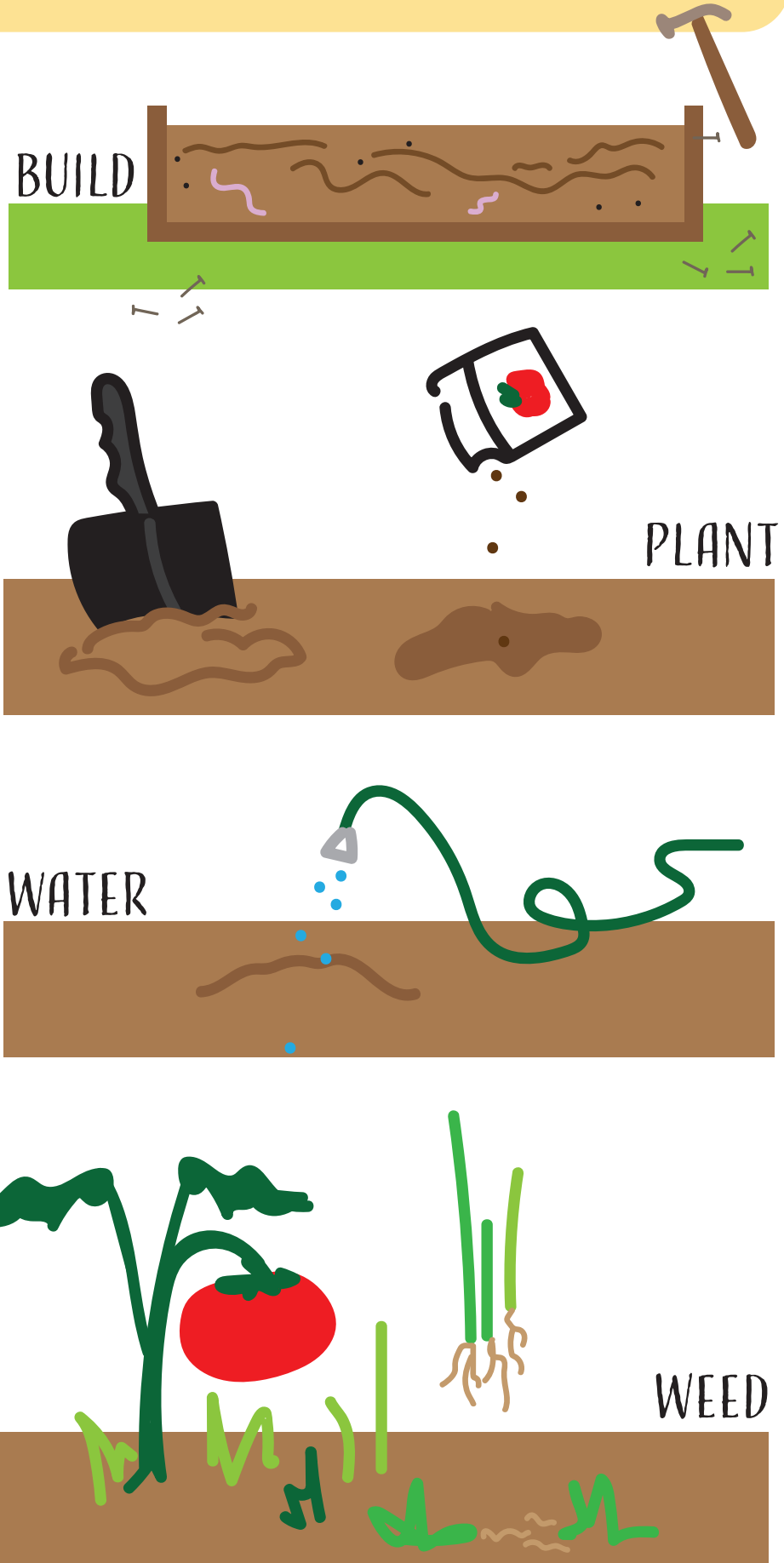
GARDENING AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

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Planting and tending to food producing plants or other garden and landscape plants (like flowers!) has many health benefits, including improved physical health.

HOW DOES GARDENING IMPROVE PHYSICAL HEALTH?

Food gardening provides opportunities for physical activity [1]. This includes building raised beds or setting up soil in containers, planting, watering, weeding, and harvesting. And, you'll have the added benefit of eating fresh fruits and vegetables. Dietary Guidelines for Americans (2020-2025) and Myplate.gov recommends filling half of your plate with fruits and vegetables for a healthy diet [2].



CAN GARDENING REALLY IMPROVE MY PHYSICAL HEALTH?

Yes! Research has shown that gardening can improve your physical health.

1. Improved health and wellbeing, and increased physical activity were reported from people who gardened and used gardens to relax [3].
2. Communal gardening helped elderly communities in England to reduce social isolation and build networks [4].
3. Gardening programs improved the eating habits and activity levels of households that received gardening supplies and attended monthly workshops [5].



HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Step 1: Do some research!

University of Maryland Extension's Home & Garden Information Center
<https://go.umd.edu/hgic>

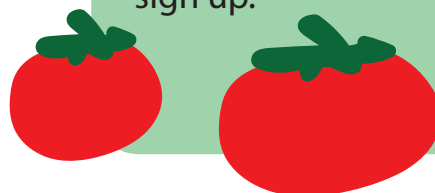
University of Maryland's Healthy Garden, Healthy You Project
<http://go.umd.edu/HealthyGardens>

National Gardening Association
<https://garden.org/>

University of Maryland Extension's Master Gardener Program
<https://go.umd.edu/mg>

Step 2: Start your own garden!
A container garden is a great way to start.

Step 3: Join a community garden!
Ask your local Parks and Recreation department for locations and ways to sign up.



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For gardening questions use the "Ask Extension" search feature through the University of Maryland Extension [<https://extension.umd.edu/ask-extension>].

For specific questions about this fact sheet, please contact Dr. Rachel Rosenberg Goldstein, Assistant Professor, Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health, School of Public Health, University of Maryland: rrosenb@umd.edu.

Works Cited

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