

Garden Fresh: Some Basic Gardening Vocabulary

We're going to start our week of gardening with some pretty basic gardening vocabulary. The reason is because English has differences in meanings that some languages don't have. For example, do you know the difference between '**property**,' a '**yard**' and a '**garden**?' These are all words that get confused when it's time to start talking about our gardening.

Today, we're going to clear up that confusion.

Before You Listen to the Recording

Draw a house seen from above. (The way you would see it in Google Earth.) If it's your own house, great. If it's just a house you'd like to have, that's okay, too. Mark where the house is, where the land that belongs to the house ends, and what you would do with that land. Where is grass? Where are the flowers? Do you want any vegetables? Where are they? Put all of this on your 'map' of the land around your house.

Now start the recording.

After You've Listened to the Recording

Look at the 'map' you've made of your house. Can you identify the 'property,' the 'yard' and the 'gardens?' Do you have flower **beds**? How many? What kind of vegetables are in your vegetable beds?

Take a moment now, to tell us about how much of your property is yard, and how much is garden. How is your garden organized? Remember, if you post your writing in the comments here, I'll be glad to correct your English.

Vocabulary

Property: If you own land, you know exactly where your land begins and ends. (I hope!) All of the land that belongs to you is your 'property.' This includes land with buildings on it, land with **gardens** on it. It even includes land with lakes on it, if you have any! If you own more than one 'piece' of land, you can say you own several properties. In fact, the word property isn't only used with land: you can call anything you own your 'property.'

Yard: Every house is built on some **property**. And most houses (in my home town, anyway) are built so that they don't cover all of the property. There is some land in front of, behind, and normally around the house. The land around a house—but that 'belongs' to the house—is called the yard. The yard can have a **garden** in it, but often we call the 'yard' the part that has grass and

the 'garden' is the garden. Because cutting the grass and doing other work in the yard isn't as relaxing as gardening, we have a different word for it: 'yard work.' "I have *yard work* to do this weekend" sounds more like work than "I have *gardening* to do this weekend."

Garden: In your **yard**, you probably have grass. And you probably have flowers. But the grass and flowers aren't mixed. (If they were, you'd cut the flowers when you cut the grass!) The grass is in the yard and the flowers are in a **garden**. Any piece of land with organized plants on it is a garden. Normally, we talk about 'flower gardens,' which have flowers, and 'vegetable gardens,' which have plants you can eat. 'Vegetable gardens' often include fruit, but for some reason we don't normally say 'fruit' garden.

Beds: **Gardens** are organized into beds. In a vegetable garden, the beds are often square or rectangle shaped pieces of land with space between them so that you can walk to care for your garden. Flower beds often have more 'artistic' shapes to make them look better.