



Weekly Newspaper Article

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Things To Do During Covid: Learn Virtually

By Lydia Holley

Because of the restrictions and precautions of people gathering in person, 2020 became the unofficial "Year of the Virtual Meeting." If you have not participated in a virtual meeting over the past several months, you are probably in the minority. Many organizations, employers, and even families have scheduled meetings over the internet.

There are even new businesses springing up telling you how to change your home or yourself to look better in the computer's camera. Some of the tips include having bright light shining toward your face, wearing pants even if you think you will not be seen from the waist down, putting the computer camera at eye level or slightly above, and not having any distracting artwork, noises, or people in the background.

What does this have to do with gardening? Maybe nothing, or possibly a lot. If you are interested in learning more about gardening, there are now numerous online classes you can take. Some are free, others are quite costly. Some are for beginners, others for experts. No matter what type of gardening you are interested in learning more about, you can find a class in that subject. Just be certain the person giving the class is truly knowledgeable and is familiar with your climate and growing conditions. Having an expert talk about seed starting in Antarctica may be interesting, but the information might not be very practical.

Over the next couple of months, there will be some days so cold or rainy that you may not be able to go outside to work. Taking an online class can keep your enthusiasm for gardening high until spring arrives. Some classes may even offer a recording which can be listened to at a later time. This is ideal for those who do not want to waste a beautiful day inside on the computer. Not many, but some may even offer a transcript. This could come in handy should you have spotty internet coverage.

An online search for gardening classes can provide a variety of choices. Again, make certain the teacher is someone that is worth your time even if there is no fee involved. Texas Gardener's *Seeds* online newsletter lists several virtual workshops from qualified persons. For local gardening information, Henderson County Master Gardener Association (HCMGA) has posted several videos on their Facebook page ([facebook.com/HCMastergardener](https://www.facebook.com/HCMastergardener)). HCMGA also offers a free monthly online newsletter, *The Inside Dirt*, which is filled with timely information. Contact the number below to receive it.

Technology, combined with a pandemic, has changed the way we communicate and the way we learn. Consider taking advantage of this to learn more about gardening.

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