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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

SHARING
SECRETS

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What are your favorite garden tools and equipment?"

I have lots of favorite tools:

Poacher's spade (a garden mattock about 15" long with steel handle), foam kneeling pad, plastic buckets (5 gallon, the type laundry detergent and paint come in), "Radio Flyer" children's wagon, wheel barrow (6 cubic feet), pole pruner, grass rake with flexible tines and narrow fan (about 8"). - *RC*

Felco pruners and a weed shredder, sold by Red Pig Tools (formerly Denman and Company), a nifty hand tool with corners and angles to slice through weeds. Bob Denman can also put a long handle on it. (www.redpigtools.com) - *BK*

Hori-Hori Japanese knife: serves well as a weeding tool, is very useful for separating dirt from sod, and also can be used as a trowel. - *PM*

Small garden "fork" about the same size as a trowel but easier to push into the ground and far easier to pry up dirt or plants. Also, it cuts fewer roots than a trowel – it's just like the larger spading fork. - *SL*

#1 - My tool belt, which holds my Felco pruners, dandelion puller and claw (instead of a trowel). - *LB*

A "Leisure Knife" by Green Top. I got it at the San Francisco Garden Show but it's available on line. Part pruner, part knife, 7" stainless steel concave blade with one serrated edge. Great for dividing, planting and weeding. - *KB*

A man, preferably one who likes gardening. - *NP*

Wilcox All-Pro diggers (see http://www.wilcoxallpro.com/wilcox3_tools.html). My favorite is the small (9") no. 50 trowel – it has a multitude of uses and its sharp tip is great for prying out weeds. I also like the 101s and the 202s. These trowels are unbendable and unbreakable.

Long-tined dinner fork, indispensable for weeding in pots.

Empty 5-gallon paint buckets, for collecting weeds, small prunings, ferrying other small garden “stuff” and collecting rainwater. - *KM*

My absolute favorite is a Japanese Hori-Hori digging knife. I got mine from Bob Denman years ago and find it invaluable. It is marvelous for digging deep rooted weeds. It can also be used for planting bulbs and bedding plants. The saw teeth on one side will cut through tough roots. The front is shovel shaped for digging. The handle is made of wood and is riveted to the blade. I couldn't live without it! - *JS*

Two very light weight items: “Bucket Seat” by Bucket Boss is a black plastic lid that fits on any five gallon bucket. It makes a seat higher than garden kneeler/seat combos. It was about \$6. The Fiskars "Power Gear Anvil Pruner" fits in the bucket and its light weight is really a bonus during rose pruning season. It is essential for me to switch from standing to sitting to kneeling and from right to left handed. The anvil gives another orientation which reduces risk of repetitive stress injury. It sells for about \$20. - *JCB*

Tools I can't live without: A flat American- made garden spade, with a wood handle. Tried the sturdy English tools but found them heavy and clunky. My 35-year-old spade has lost about an inch of its original length while improving soils and scraping weeds. Looked for a backup recently and the closest I could find was the TrueTemper/Ames “garden spade” (www.ames.com), nearly as light and sturdy. It does such a good job improving soil, I can use my other favorites now, a stainless steel trowel and hand fork set, from the Chelsea Show many years ago.

A similar pair is still sold by Spear & Jackson (www.daisyfieldsoregon.com), but the wood handles aren't as nice. Work the soil with these for a decade or two and you can dig, cultivate and weed with just your bare hands, my favorite tool of all. - *BS*

The “Soil Scooper” is a fantastic trowel for digging, weeding, planting, cultivating and more. The stainless steel blade has serrated edges that come to a point. It's 12” long. - *EF*

My hands, of course, with "Gloves in a Bottle," a "plastic" skin cream that offers some skin protection, and helps washing-up after working in the garden, or on the car, motorcycle, bicycle, changing oil, etc. It doesn't, however, shield me from Agave! - *TE*