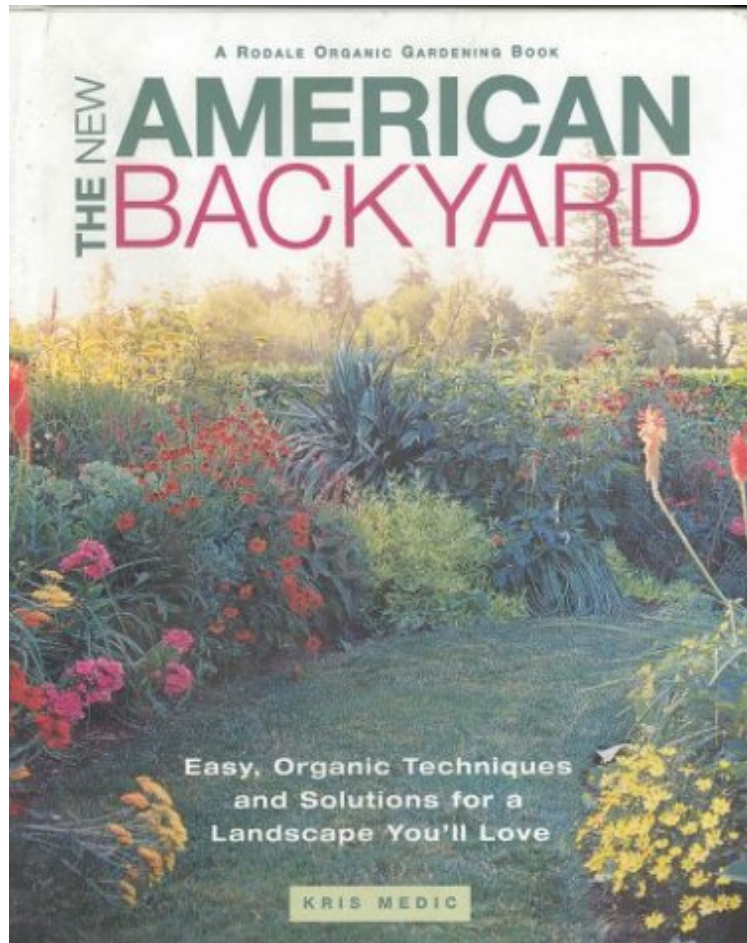


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The New American Backyard : Easy, Organic Techniques and Solutions for a Landscape You'll Love

Kris Medic

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Kris Medic : The New American Backyard : Easy, Organic Techniques and Solutions for a Landscape You'll Love before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The New American Backyard : Easy, Organic Techniques and Solutions for a Landscape You'll Love:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. wonderful book.By John Brent SohnGreat book, wonderful author. Will buy all she writes. John1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great All-Purpose Landscaping BookBy StitchesWithPetsSimply said, this is an EXCELLENT landscaping book for beginner to experienced home landscapers. Full of practical information on many topics for the DIY landscaper, including plant selection and tool maintenance. Even if you have more money than time or strength, Medic's advice will help you make informed decisions and get more value for your dollar.Don't let the word "organic" on the cover scare you; publisher is Rodale.

If you match the plant, site, and proper planting techniques, you shouldn't need much in the way of inorganics. My advice to a neighbor upon asking was, "If you can't tolerate rabbits eating your liriope, plant something else there or move downtown." 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Get this one! By Theresa Malone I picked up a copy of this book from Kris Medic back in October, when she was a guest speaker at our garden-club meeting. I purchased it before her presentation, and by the time her talk was over, I was already thinking I had made a good decision. Having lived in Columbus IN for 17 years, I recognized her name and knew of her devotion to organic techniques for designing and maintaining landscapes. I had no intention of picking up the book and reading it cover-to-cover, that is not how I would usually approach a book like this. However, that is exactly what happened. I took it along to one of my son's ortho. appt's. In for a bit of a wait, I started reading. I became completely engrossed and was very surprised when my son came out and an hour had passed! I had read nearly one-third of the book. It is rare for me to pick up a 'how to' gardening book and read it in this fashion. This book is a real gem for anyone, especially those who garden (or wish to) organically. Kris touches on everything you can think of to do with landscaping or gardening, including many charts and lists to help guide you in the pursuit of a great yard. I especially like her use of these flowcharts and lists to help you reach your desired goals. Many of us don't put enough thought into our landscapes, until we've made many mistakes. This book could help new or aspiring gardeners to prevent those early mistakes, and help those of us who have already made them, redeem ourselves. Kris includes all aspects of landscaping, including her top ten choices of favorite trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, perennials, and annuals. These choices are pictured and include all the information you need and why she considers it a top-pick. You will also find chapters on hardscaping, reducing water use, organic methods for preventing pests and diseases and a very informative section on the correct way to prune. This is a book I do not plan to loan out--get your own copy! I imagine I will refer to it often. Many of the methods and ideas included will mean less time for work and maintenance, and more time for me to enjoy the landscape. This spring, I plan to stop mowing a good portion of our yard. It's simply not necessary, and may have a detrimental effect, keeping beneficial insects and animals from our property. Instead, with Kris' permission, I'll have more time to sit on the garden bench and watch the butterflies.

.com The Rodale Organic Gardening Book series is a consistently reliable basic reference, and the colorful New American Backyard is no exception. Kris Medic is an arborist who, according to her jacket biography, is almost absurdly qualified to write about garden design. In this comfortable, useful volume she provides a guide to sprucing up the backyard for those of us who weren't born knowing what an NPK ratio is. Suburban America's obsession with the perfect swath of green hasn't been an altogether healthy one, but thankfully the excessive use of weed-killers, overmowing, and wasteful watering habits that characterized the last half-century of lawn and garden care are being reevaluated in books like Medic's. Medic emphasizes that adoption of responsible organic methods can actually be more effective than chemical intervention in obtaining that lush lawn of our dreams. It's just plain sensible, for example, to cut the grass at a relatively high level and to leave the clippings on the ground: the long grass and clippings create shade, which limits opportunities for weed growth and keeps the roots and soil cool and moist longer, requiring less frequent watering. It's also easier--and that's the message at the heart of this book. The most thumbed-through and soil-stained pages of The New American Backyard are sure to be those in the second half, "Timesaving Lawn and Garden Techniques." How to sharpen lawnmower blades yourself, how to prune a tree or thin out a bush with the speed and confidence of a pro, how to choose a grass-seed mixture that's right for your yard (and decipher those cryptic seed-bag labels), how to use water efficiently--Medic's valuable tips will help you to cut down the time spent weeding or waving the hose over the lawn on Sunday mornings when you'd rather be relaxing with a cup of coffee and the paper. The first part of the book contains the ubiquitous checklists, using which the prospective gardener is supposed to shape a vision of the ideal (but doable) backyard environment. The reader should not be discouraged by the presence of these vague lists--in books of this sort they're never particularly helpful, and aren't in this one--because Medic, perhaps anticipating our impatience with authors who prod us into penciling into their books what we already know, quickly abandons that annoying tack in favor of the juicy stuff: well-illustrated, real-life landscaping makeovers and detailed descriptions of how to deal with common yard problems. We learn how and what to plant in those low marshy areas and in small or odd-shaped lots, and how to reduce street noise, wind, and glare. A directory of Medic's "top plant picks" features thorough evaluations of specific varieties of trees, shrubs, groundcovers, vines, perennials, and annuals. While the list is certainly not exhaustive, and of course not every plant is suited to every region of the country, Medic's riffs on, for example, the amur maple or English ivy will give novices an idea of the factors to consider in choosing what to plant: the variety's mature size, hardiness and heat zones, preferred sites (sun or shade, swampy soil or dry, and so on), pruning requirements, and pest and disease issues. Readers whose backyards have ever been besieged by Japanese beetles or crabgrass may have a hard time accepting Medic's recommendations on the cure front (shake the bugs off?), but on the prevention side, this book makes it easy to avoid or at least ameliorate those problems in the planning and planting stages. Xeriscaping, composting, and preventive pest

control have never seemed more practical than in Medic's water-wise and pesticide-poor chapters. --Liana Fredley