

## THE GARDEN CONSERVANCY

# Preparing for Your Open Day

*Thank you for participating in Garden Conservancy Open Days!  
This booklet outlines key things to keep in mind as you prepare  
for your Open Day, as well as how to manage visitors during  
the Open Day and what to do after it's over.*

### BEFORE THE OPEN DAY

#### **Determine location for a welcome area**

Setting up a welcome area for your visitors is essential to orient visitors and check their names off the preregistered attendee list that will be emailed to you the Friday before the event. Typically, garden hosts set up a small table near the entry to the garden, with seating and enough table space to accommodate the attendee list and a folded tent card with welcome information.

#### **Plan the welcome area**

You may want to greet visitors at the welcome table yourself or recruit friends and family members to help with the checking off the names, answering questions, and directing visitors for the maximum enjoyment of your garden.

#### **Plan how best to direct visitor traffic and parking**

Plan ahead how best to handle visitors' parking and traffic flow. Two (more if requested) parking signs are included in the host kit to signal designated parking sites for visitors.

#### **Prepare for safety in your garden**

Safety for both garden hosts and visitors is a top priority during Open Days. We want each visit to be both enjoyable and safe for all. Please keep visitors' safety in mind as you prepare for your Open Day. Slippery areas, rough terrain, and uneven paths should be roped off. Remember to keep tools, hoses, etc., put away.



**Open Days** is a program of the Garden Conservancy, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve, share, and celebrate America's gardens and gardening traditions for the education and inspiration of the public. [gardenconservancy.org/opendays](https://gardenconservancy.org/opendays)

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## THE MORNING OF YOUR OPEN DAY

Set up the welcome area with handouts provided in the Garden Host Kit.

Set up directional signs and parking signs to help direct visitors to your property and the welcome area. As all visitors must be preregistered in order to respect capacity limits, **please do not use lawn signs from previous years.** Please use just the new card signs with our logo and "PREREGISTERED ADMISSION."

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## DURING YOUR OPEN DAY

**Greet, register, and admit garden guests:** At the welcome area, garden hosts and/or volunteer greeters should welcome visitors and check their names off the attendee list.

- If any visitors registered after the list of attendees was compiled, please ask them to present confirmation of registration on their phone or on a printout of their confirmation email.
- If visitors present themselves without having preregistered and there is enough room in your garden to accommodate them, please ask them to log onto our website to register online (they can scan the QR code on the welcome tent card with their mobile phone to go directly to our website to register.)
- If your garden is full, do not hesitate to tell unregistered visitors that entry is strictly by pre-registration.
- Please do NOT collect cash, checks, or paper tickets.

## AFTER THE OPEN DAY

Please email a photo of the checked-off name list to **Opendays@gardenconservancy.org**, along with any suggestions you have to improve the Open Days experience.

Please keep any remaining materials for reuse in future years or recycle them.

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## QUESTIONS?

**Email** [opendays@gardenconservancy.org](mailto:opendays@gardenconservancy.org)  
**Call** 1.888.842.2442 (M-F, 9-5 Eastern) toll-free  
**Visit** [gardenconservancy.org/opendays](http://gardenconservancy.org/opendays)

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## ABOUT GARDEN CONSERVANCY OPEN DAYS

Open Days is a program of the Garden Conservancy, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve, share, and celebrate America's gardens and gardening traditions for the education and inspiration of the public.

Open Days, the Garden Conservancy's flagship educational program, celebrates our country's gardens and gardeners, horticulture and horticulturists, and garden design and garden designers. It connects people to nature, to fellow gardeners, and to the act of gardening. And it starts with the simple act of opening a garden gate.

The first Open Days gardens opened in 1995, thanks to the leadership of extraordinary gardeners Page Dickey and Penelope Maynard. Since then, thanks to our network of volunteer regional ambassadors and garden hosts, Open Days has expanded to the four corners of the country. In addition, Digging Deeper, Garden Masters Series, and other educational programs have grown out of Open Days self-guided private garden tours. To date, more than 1.35 million Open Days visitors have experienced over 4,000 of America's most inspiring private gardens. Many of these gardens are rarely, if ever, otherwise open to the public.

In 2021, the Garden Conservancy is celebrating 26 years of Open Days bringing people together in a rich array of private gardens across the country.  
**[gardenconservancy.org/opendays](https://gardenconservancy.org/opendays)**

### How are gardens selected for Open Days?

Our network of volunteer Open Days regional ambassadors and nonprofit partners are hard at work year-round scouting and recruiting exceptional gardens for Open Days. We also accept self-nominated applications in areas where the program is already established.

### How is the program organized?

Garden Conservancy Open Days would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our volunteers who coordinate schedules, collect information, and help us promote Open Days each year. Since 1995, this roster of volunteers has grown to include nearly 300 men and women. A small team of dedicated staff members coordinate the program from the Garden Conservancy office in Garrison, NY.

### Where do admission fees go?

Open Days admission fees support the mission of the nonprofit Garden Conservancy and make Open Days itself possible. The Open Days network strengthens all of our education and preservation programs across the country. Our Open Days partnerships with other local nonprofit organizations also help support their own individual missions and bolster their communities.

## THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN OPEN DAYS!

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