



**SUE McDOUGALL**  
Gardening expert

## TOP 5 PLANTS TO AVOID

Many plants can cause a problem to dogs if they are eaten. It's best to avoid the following varieties if you have a dog that chews on leaves and stems.

- \* **Oleander:** All parts of this plant are toxic if ingested.
- \* **Azalea and rhododendrons:** All parts of these varieties are toxic.
- \* **Bulbs:** Daffodil and jonquil bulbs should be avoided if the dog digs continually and is prone to eating what it finds in the soil.
- \* **Alliums:** This genus includes onions and garlic.
- \* **Avocado:** All parts of the avocado should be avoided, including the bark and seeds.

## HOME GARDENING EXPERT DARREN SEINOR IS HERE TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR BACKYARD DILEMMAS

**THE PROBLEM** Marion Bristown, from Stoneville, writes that she has some very healthy frangipani cuttings that she has left in a bucket of fresh water. She wants to know if she should plant them now if they start growing roots in the water, or if she should dry them out first.

**THE SOLUTION** It is best to dry out frangipani cuttings in a cool, shady spot for a few days before planting out or potting up. The cut end should have sealed up and stopped bleeding sap.

**THE PROBLEM** Sam Bailey writes, via email, that she has an empty flowerbed in her garden. She is getting married in late April and wants some advice on what to plant for a lovely show on the day.

**THE SOLUTION** It's hard to say what to plant without more details but there are always flowering annuals as potted colour available, but I would pre-order them as soon as possible. Also in late April, many roses are looking fantastic as are a wide range of WA native plants.

**DARREN SEINOR**

### The HOME gardening team to the rescue

For your chance to get gardening advice, tell us in 100 words or less about your garden and its problems. Send an email to [housecalls@sundaytimes.news1td.com.au](mailto:housecalls@sundaytimes.news1td.com.au) or write to **The Sunday Times, HOME Editor, GPO Box D174, Perth, WA 6840**. Include your full name and address and a daytime phone number. Please do not send any soil samples or plant cuttings.

All readers whose gardening questions are published will receive a pair of Hortex Bi-Pass Secateurs with foam grip, valued at \$15.95.



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"talk". If your child is frightened in public, calmly and quietly increase the distance away from the dog. He/she probably won't be able to touch a dog for a long time, but as long as your child can be reassured when there are dogs present, that's as much as you can aim for at the moment.

### CHOOSE EMPOWERING WORDS

Acknowledging your child's anxiety and fear is part of the healing process, as well as using positive statements in the presence of dogs. Use language that shifts your child's thinking from fear to fearlessness.

Comments such as "You're so brave", "Well done for looking and passing by the dog" and "Every day you're getting better and better with dogs" are building blocks towards your child gaining confidence.

### PHYSICAL CONTACT

As your child gains more confidence, the next step is actually touching

a puppy or dog. Introducing a dog through family or friends is a sound head start, since you already have history of the dog's temperament.

Another option is visiting a pet shop where viewing puppies from a safe distance will provide some sense of control. This will help the child feel safe, especially if it's not quite ready to touch.

Avoidance of dogs is almost impossible, so it's definitely worthwhile helping your child conquer his or her fear.

Not only is the aim to have your child safely and willingly interacting with well-tempered dogs, but also to learn respect for dogs and how to safely approach them.

The fear of dogs can take months for some children to overcome. So do your best to avoid setbacks by educating your child about dog behaviour. Then the child's experiences with dogs will be happy ones.



Don't be too surprised if, eventually, you are asked to have a new member in your family!

Visit [www.kathysdogtraining.com.au](http://www.kathysdogtraining.com.au) for further information about dog behaviour and training and while you're there, sign up to receive some free dog training tips. Check out Kathy's dates for her popular Intensive Dog Workshop designed for reactive dogs.

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