

Chemicals don't have to be used for weed removal

By Sunset

Hand pulling or hoeing is your first line of defense against weeds, especially annual and biennial kinds. If you're diligent for several years about removing these before they set seed, their numbers will decline significantly.

Perennial weeds are harder to manage. Once they've passed the seedling stage, they develop rhizomes, bulbs, tubers, or extensive root systems that aid in reproduction. Pulling usually doesn't remove these underground structures completely, and the weeds can resprout from fragments left behind. It's best to dig these weeds, removing as much of the root system as you can – a process you may need to repeat several times.

Don't leave pulled or hoed-out weeds lying on bare ground, since they may take root again. Leafy annual or biennial types that do not yet have flowers or seeds can safely be relegated to the compost pile, as can the top growth of perennial weeds (before seeding). But roots of perennials (dandelions and quack grass, for example) should be tossed in the trash rather than composted – as should any weeds that have set seed.

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