What Factors to Consider When Looking at a Growing Space

01. Light:

How much light does the space get, and from what direction?

- How many hours of the day does the space have direct sunlight? How is this different in the spring, summer, fall and winter?
- **North-facing** light on its own is usually not enough for vegetable crops.
- **East-facing** spaces get morning light. Spaces that get only east-facing light will be cooler overall.
- **West-facing** spaces get afternoon sun. These spaces tend to get much warmer, and are at a higher risk for drying out, especially if they also get east- or south-facing light. They may also have a slightly longer growing season because of this.
- **South-facing** spaces get the most daylight.

02. Wind:

How much wind does the space get?

- How open is the area? What windbreaks are in place?
- Do nearby buildings funnel in wind (and possibly trash)?
- Keep in mind that high-wind areas are prone to drying out, and many plants will take wind damage that will greatly decrease the productivity and quality of the crop.

03. Shade:

What is around that cases shade onto to space?

- Houses/buildings
- Natural structures like boulders, hills, or even mountains
- Trees
- In the desert sun, keep in mind that dappled light coming through the trees can be helpful for crops that are sensitive to intense light, excessive heat, or drying out.

04. Allelochemicals:

When plants emit toxic compounds into the ground to prevent other plants from growing near them.

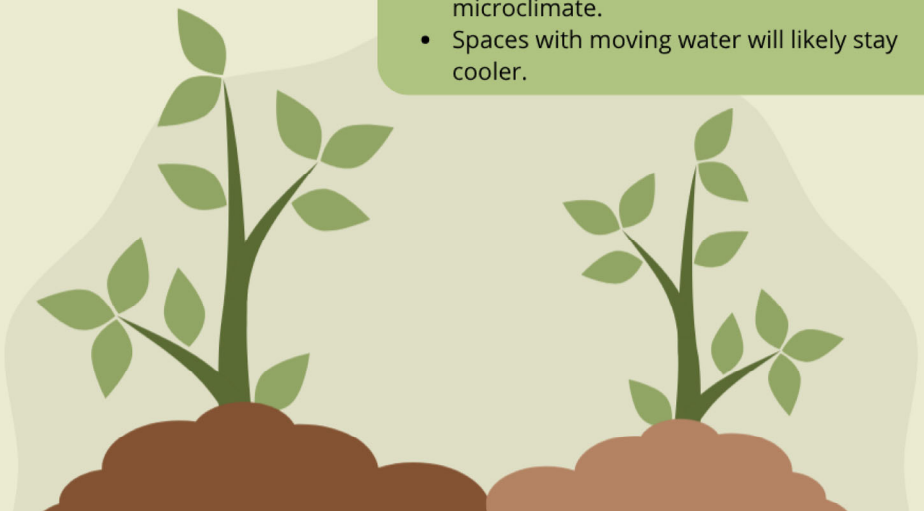
- Salt Cedar
- Walnuts
- Some varieties of oak

05. Root Zone:

Trees and weeds like bindweed may have invasive and persistent root systems that leach nutrients from your growing space.

06. Heat:

- Spaces out in the open will likely get warmer during the day and cooler at night.
- Structures like buildings, walls, concrete sidewalks, and boulders will retain heat longer into the evening and create a warmer microclimate.
- Spaces with moving water will likely stay cooler.



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