

How to Become a Pima County Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

Who are the Master Gardener Extension Volunteers?

Pima County Master Gardener Extension Volunteers are university-trained volunteers who are interested in gardening and landscaping, are enthusiastic, willing to learn, and who serve as community educators. Upon completing a specialized 50-hour training course and internship in low-desert home gardening and landscaping, Master Gardener Extension Volunteers contribute time as volunteers to provide research-based educational leadership in home gardening and landscaping throughout Pima County

Pima County Master Gardener Extension Volunteers help the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension fulfill its educational outreach mission by:

- Answering horticultural questions over the phone, in person or through the Extension website in the Plant Clinic and Home Consultations
- Providing education programs to the public such as Saturday Seminars, Library Talks, and Demonstration Garden Tours
- Creating and maintaining demonstration gardens that showcase new plants, new planting methods, composting, new irrigation methods, etc.

Is the Pima County Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program for You?

- Do you want to help people in your community learn more about landscaping and gardening?
- Do you like plants and gardening?
- Do you want to expand your gardening knowledge and skills?
- Do you have enough time to attend the 50-hour training and complete at least 50 hours of volunteer service and 10 hours of continuing education each year?

If you answered yes to all of these questions, you may be a perfect candidate for the Pima County Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program.

Benefits of Being A Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

- *Help Your Community*
Many newcomers and inexperienced gardeners throughout the county greatly need gardening help and advice. As an Extension Volunteer, you can help people solve their plant problems and help promote environmentally responsible behavior through appropriate plant selection, water conservation and least-toxic pest control. Our informative training will give you the skills needed to diagnose plant problems and give you the confidence to share your expertise with others.
- *Increase Your Gardening Knowledge and Skills*
In addition to the 50-hour training course, you will have access to monthly education programs, a monthly Master Gardener newsletter, advanced training on various topics, and a variety of specialists in the gardening and landscaping industries.

- *Join Great Social Network of Amazing Gardeners*
You will get the opportunity to work with a variety of knowledgeable, talented and interested individuals who all share a common interest in gardening. A very fun group!
- *Gain Leadership Opportunities and Recognition*
There are many opportunities in the program to take on leadership roles and gain recognition for your investment in the community.

Being a Master Gardener Extension Volunteer is fun, interesting and rewarding.

Certification

Persons qualify to become a Master Gardener Extension Volunteer by completing a 16-week 50-hour training course and giving at least 50 hours of service per year to one or more of the approved projects. Classes are conducted in Tucson on Tuesday mornings from 9:00am to 12:00pm, starting in August and running through early December.

Students enrolled in this program receive training in botany, soils, propagation, water use, insects, weeds, integrated pest management (IPM), desert landscape plants, vegetables, fruit trees, roses, container gardening, turf grass, landscape plant maintenance, and plant problem and disease diagnostic techniques for the home gardener. There is a final exam which students must pass with a grade of 70% to continue.

Following the course, graduates enter an intern period for up to one year before they receive full Master Gardener Extension Volunteer status. Upon completion of the internship, Master Gardener Extension volunteers receive a certificate of completion and name badge designating them as a University of Arizona Pima County Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Extension Volunteer.

To maintain Master Gardener Extension Volunteer status, a volunteer must participate in at least *50 hours of approved service activities and complete 10 hours of continuing training* each year.

How to Apply

Find the application on line on the Pima County Master Gardener web page or at the Pima County Extension office, 4210 N Campbell. Applications for the 2018 fall class will be accepted starting in January 2018 and ending in April 14, 2018. Applicants who are selected for interviews will meet with the selection committee during the weeks of May 1-18. Classes will begin August 7, 2018 and end December 4, 2018. All classes are held at the Pima County Extension Office from 9:00 am-noon on Tuesdays.

For more information, contact the Pima County Cooperative Extension Office in **Tucson at 520-626-5161** or the Satellite Office in **Green Valley at 520-648-0808**.